Developing Stamina for Decolonizing Higher Education:
A Workbook for Non-Indigenous People

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PLEASE NOTE: What you are reading is a _working draft_, currently being piloted in various contexts. As of now, it is only available in PDF format at https://higheredotherwise.net/resources/. For the foreseeable future, we will continue to revise this workbook. If you have feedback about how you have used this text or other comments, please submit them to: sharon.stein@ubc.ca.

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Preface

This workbook is the result of collective efforts. It emerged largely out of our own learnings from doing decolonizing work alongside each other as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, in education and arts institutions, and with Indigenous communities in what are currently known as Canada, the United States, Brazil and Peru. This workbook is also greatly shaped by the text _Towards Braiding,_ and includes elements of that text in a form that has been translated for relevance to higher education contexts. Many resources that are presented in the text were produced through our work as part of the Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures research/arts/ecology collective.

The need for a text of this kind has become increasingly clear as institutions of higher education continue to voice commitments to address their historical legacies and ongoing perpetuation of colonization. Whether and how these stated institutional commitments actually translate into substantive action are some of the questions that led us to produce this resource. However, we emphasize that regardless of the ways that institutions operationalize decolonization, current interest in decolonization is largely thanks to the labour of Indigenous people who have continuously resisted the hegemony and universality of Western education, and insisted on the right to determine their own forms of culturally relevant and sustaining education. Even as decolonization has become a complex, fraught framework for institutional change, it would not be on the table for us to wrestle with if it were not for the tireless advocacy efforts of Indigenous peoples themselves.

Decolonization is for everybody. In many ways, Indigenous perspectives, epistemologies, and ontologies need to be centred in decolonizing work, but there is no single way to approach decolonization; and different communities require different support, strategies, and conversations. Thus, creating a universal text is not only impossible, but it also repeats the imperial lie that knowledge can be universal, disembodied, and decontextualized. This book is intended specifically for non-Indigenous readers. While there is a risk in this choice of recentring the learning of non-Indigenous people, we have found that despite growing interest and enthusiasm about decolonization, many non-Indigenous people are unsure of how to approach it in practice in their own contexts. This can lead them to feel immobilized or, worse, to reproduce harmful colonial practices without realizing that they are doing it. That is what this workbook tries to interrupt or pre-empt.

Generally speaking, non-Indigenous people, especially white people, tend to underestimate just how deeply colonial patterns are embedded in their minds, bodies, relationships, and institutions; they also tend to overestimate their capacity to interrupt and undo these patterns, assuming that good intentions will be sufficient. This gap between _where we actually are_ in our decolonizing work and _where we would like to be_ sets us up for disappointment or frustration when things don't go as expected, or when complexities, contradictions, and failures emerge. This workbook invites people to be more honest about where we are really at, the learning and unlearning that still needs to be done, and the range of foreseeable and unforeseeable challenges that we will face in this process.

White people often expect to be made to feel comfortable and affirmed in conversations about decolonization. This can lead them to prioritize maintaining their own 'good' feelings rather than prioritize the imperative to address harmful colonial systems and desires. Further, the labour of comforting or assuring white people often falls to Indigenous people. Indeed, white people feel entitled to this labour—a demand often expressed in unconscious ways. This is another reason why it is important to have different resources, and even different spaces for decolonizing work; much of the work that non-Indigenous people need to do in order to face and unravel their investments in

colonialism can be retraumatizing if experienced or witnessed by Indigenous peoples. Conversely, Indigenous people openly expressing their frustrations with colonial behaviours can lead to defensiveness among non-Indigenous people and result in destructive responses.

This workbook provides an invitation to non-Indigenous (especially white) people to begin some of the learning and unlearning that is a precondition for decolonizing work in ways that do not create more (uncompensated) labour for Indigenous people. This workbook also seeks to prepare those who engage with it to create more space for the complexities, tensions, discomforts, and contradictions that are inevitably involved in the practice of decolonization. We issue an invitation to non-Indigenous people to 'grow up' and out of their presumed entitlements and exceptionalisms, and into a sense of responsibility not premised on calculated, perceived benefits. Because this work is difficult and often challenges closely held assumptions about who we are and what we want, we can only make this invitation available, and those who feel called to respond to that invitation will do so.

This invitation has two starting points. As you receive this invitation, consider your willingness to work from these starting points. We do not ask for you to agree with either of these starting points, but rather ask that you agree to work with them and consider what becomes possible when we start from them. The first starting point is that colonialism is a systemic problem and therefore no one is innocent of complicity. Our lives and livelihoods are structurally dependent on the continuity of an ongoing colonial system. Thus, it is everyone's responsibility to mitigate the impacts of this system, and work towards its end. But how we do that work will depend on our context and our positionality within this system; we are not all equally implicated in harm, nor equally positioned to intervene.

The second starting point is that the work of unlearning colonial desires and practices, and learning to be and relate differently, is often difficult, slow, uncomfortable, unpredictable, and even painful. You will make mistakes (even when you 'know better'); conflicts will arise; you will become frustrated or feel burnt out; and perhaps even be tempted to stop at points. It is important to remember in these moments that Indigenous people do not have the option of stopping the work of decolonization; it is a mark of colonial privilege that non-Indigenous people, especially white people, have this choice. Thus, it is important to find sources of vitality to sustain this work, for instance, by finding ways to do the work collectively, and when possible, joyfully. This includes the joy of laughing at oneself!

To deepen the possibilities for unlearning and learning in the context of this workbook, we further invite readers to approach this text from their 'stretch' zone, rather than their 'comfort' or 'panic' zones. The stretch zone is the ideal space for difficult learning. Meanwhile, new learning is limited in the comfort zone, where existing frames and assumptions remain unexamined; or in the panic zone, where one is too agitated to allow space for anything else. The tools and frameworks offered in this workbook may or may not make sense fully until the moment when their contextually-relevant use becomes clear, but we can 'pre-load' them so that they are already there when we need them.

Finally, we emphasize that although we focus this text on decolonization in higher education, it likely has relevance in other contexts. Beyond this we note that it might be useful to distinguish between the institutional *job* of decolonization, and the deeper *work* of decolonization. The institutional job of decolonization is inevitably limited and dependent on what is strategically possible in a particular institutional context. However, the deeper work of decolonization is not bounded by what is possible in existing institutions, or indeed by what is currently imaginable, but rather is the work of accepting responsibility for growing up and showing up differently to do what is needed. Through this work, we

can begin the long-term project of unlearning entrenched colonial modes of existence and learning to live together differently in ways that are largely unknown and unknowable at the outset.

Terminology

- Indigenous people: Throughout this text we refer to 'Indigenous people(s).' Like all terms, this term is imperfect and imprecise as it places different nations and communities under a single umbrella and can risk reproducing generalizations about Indigenous peoples. Like all people, Indigenous people are diverse and heterogeneous, both within and between communities. Hence, we emphasize that when we speak about the experiences of 'Indigenous people in higher education,' we are speaking about what commonly occurs, which does not mean that this is the experience or interpretation of every individual Indigenous person. Indigenous people also hold divergent views about what the decolonization of higher education should look like, or whether it is even a desirable or worthwhile goal. It is not the place of non-Indigenous people to try and define for Indigenous people what decolonization 'should' look like.

- Non-Indigenous people: We intentionally use the term 'non-Indigenous people,' instead of, for instance, 'settlers' or 'occupiers' because we realize that, like the term 'Indigenous', 'non-Indigenous' encapsulates a heterogeneous group of people with distinct relationships to Indigenous peoples. We do not offer a detailed engagement with the many important complexities, tensions, and incommensurabilities that exist within and between the different communities that make up the umbrella term 'non-Indigenous' and Indigenous peoples, but we encourage readers to consult the many other texts that do this work. When relevant, we refer to specific groups – e.g. white people. We also encourage those who engage this workbook to consider how their particular positionality and social positions shape the way that they read and engage the text, and more broadly, how they understand and enact decolonization efforts in higher education and beyond.

- Indigenization vs Decolonization: Both Indigenization and decolonization have contested meanings, and the differences between the terms are equally contested. We draw loosely on the definitions offered in *Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions*, which defines Indigenization as "a process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts," and decolonization as "the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches." We frame this text around decolonization because we focus on the need to identify, interrupt, and unravel colonial patterns and dispositions; however, we also note that decolonization efforts must also support and work in parallel with Indigenous-led Indigenization.

- Reconciliation: In general, we do not evoke reconciliation throughout this text. Taking our lead from nuanced critiques from Indigenous scholars and activists, we are conscious of the ways that reconciliation has been mobilized in public discourse to falsely suggest that colonization is 'over,' and what's more, that Indigenous people should "get over it" so that "we" can "move on." This translates to a demand that Indigenous people reconcile themselves to a still ongoing colonialism. That being said, conversations or programming about reconciliation can potentially be mobilized as sites of intervention for deepening the examination of colonization if engaged in strategic ways.

Chapter 1: Introduction

What Is This Workbook For?
This workbook is for people who have some sense that decolonizing higher education is important, including those who have not yet begun this work and don't know where to start, as well as those who have already begun the work and have become confused, frustrated, or disillusioned along the way.

Decolonization does not simply involve intellectual work, although in higher education contexts this is often the dimension that is most emphasized. It also involves *affective* work (which entails acknowledging, analyzing, and taking responsibility for processing our often uncomfortable, embodied and emotional responses to the tensions, conflicts, and uncertainties that arise in decolonization efforts); and *relational* work (which entails mending broken relationships in ways that honour the integrity of this difficult process by focus on the development of deep respect, reciprocity, trust, and consent rather than prioritizing the end or outcome in transactional ways).

For this reason, this workbook does not focus on describing the many ways that colonialism and related systems, including white supremacy, capitalism, patriarchy, and ableism, operate in higher education. There are many important texts that do this work, including many of those listed in the "Additional Resources" at the end of this text. While having a deep understanding of colonialism and its complexities is an essential element of any decolonization effort, in our experience having an intellectual grasp of the harmful effects of colonization does not translate necessarily into a decolonial disposition or orientation. Thus, this text seeks to offer something different.

Even when we can agree intellectually and politically with the need for decolonial change in theory, we often resist those changes in practice, especially when we sense that our perceived exceptionalism, entitlements, epistemic certainty, moral authority, and other promises and pleasures that colonization offers are being challenged. It is extremely difficult to break the colonial patterns that we are socialized into and rewarded for, especially when those patterns are enjoyable, easy, and affirming. Thus, there is a need to be vigilant about how we might be reproducing those patterns, and to work consistently toward balancing the imperatives for intellectual, affective, and relational rigour. This is the approach to decolonization that this workbook seeks to support among those who use it.

Doing this work is part of creating the conditions under which non-Indigenous people can show up differently to engage in the collective work of decolonization, and thus, the conditions under which genuine, generative conversations and collaborations around decolonization between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can become possible. In this sense, preparing for the affective and relational challenges of decolonization can be understood as a part of 'doing one's homework' that extends beyond the practice of educating oneself intellectually about colonization and Indigenous peoples. When we fail to do our own homework, we tend to create more work for other people.

Doing one's homework does not mean that difficulties will not arise in the process of decolonization, but it can help to prepare people to hold space for the challenges when they do. Specifically, it can help enable relationships to be sustained when conflicts inevitably arise. For instance, we can build non-Indigenous peoples' affective stamina so that their fragilities and defenses are not activated when someone points out they have repeated a systemic colonial pattern. To this end, this workbook offers frameworks, tools, and strategies that can help non-Indigenous people to develop the stamina to stay

with discomfort, deepen their sense of responsibility, sit with their complicity without seeking absolution, and hold space for the inevitable challenges and complexities of decolonization.

Having articulated what this text is intended to do, we also note that one text cannot do everything. Other texts offer more specific, direct guidance for decolonization related to policy, curriculum, pedagogy, faculty recruitment and promotion, student recruitment and retention, community engagement, and so on. We include some of these in the reading list at the end of this workbook.

The Long Haul of Decolonization

Among those who are involved in decolonizing work, we see a common pattern. Initially, when people first start to be engaged, it is because there is either some excitement or desire to make a difference with one's intervention, and so one seeks safe, easy, feel-good solutions. In doing so, one can often achieve a sense of purpose, security, and redemption, at least temporarily.

However, at some point, the fantasy of quick fixes comes crashing down as people encounter the inevitable complexities, uncertainties, paradoxes, conflicts, and pushbacks involved in this work. At this point, people can feel hurt, depressed, hopeless, immobilized, and deeply disappointed, and in some cases tempted to give up their decolonizing efforts altogether. What this workbook seeks to do is support people to develop the stamina, flexibility, accountability, humility, and sobriety that will be required to sustain the messy, uncomfortable, multi-layered work of decolonization in the long-term.

Non-Indigenous people have been socialized into systemic colonial habits of knowing, being, and relating for most or all of their lives; these habits cannot be unraveled overnight. By having patience with uncertainty, vulnerability, and non-linear movement, and by integrating multiple dimensions of decolonization, they might be better able to weather the inevitable ups and downs of this work.
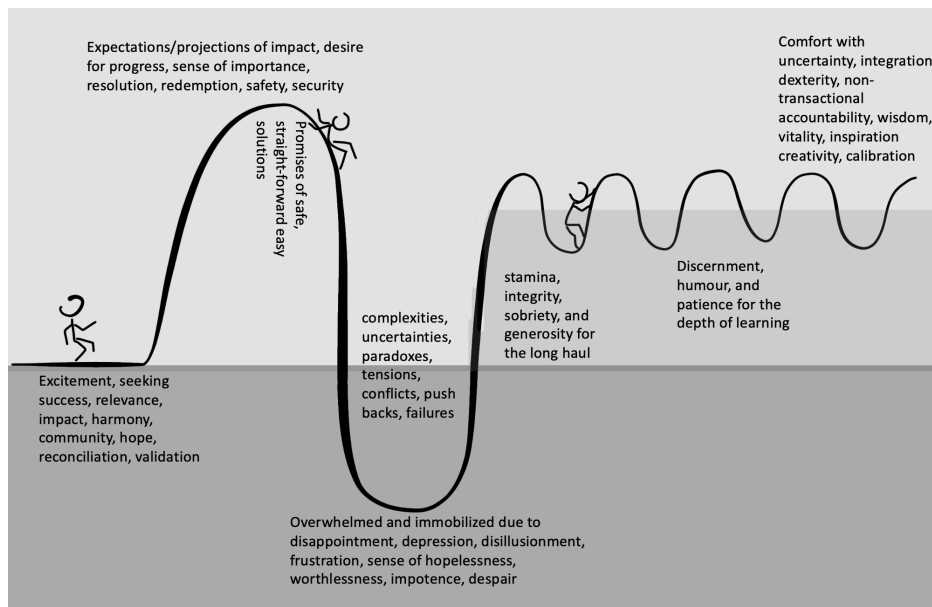

Figure 1: Common Ups and Downs of the Decolonizing Journey

This workbook can be especially useful for those who already find themselves in the pit of disappointment and despair, looking for support in order to find a way out, toward perhaps a steadier path of transformation. However, for those just beginning this journey, this workbook might also

support them to skip over the initial dramatic highs and lows, and walk directly toward something that is more sustainable. In both cases, there will still be ups and downs along the way, but with the capacities that one develops at the outset and continues to deepen over time, these ups and downs may be less dramatic and less likely to become overwhelming and derail the process entirely.

Despite our emphasis on the need for patience in decolonizing work (with oneself and others), we also need to be attentive to who is paying for this slow pace of change. In other words: How can we respect the pace and readiness of people's learning, while being accountable to those negatively affected by this learning and its pace? We invite you to stay with this question throughout the text.

Who Is This Workbook For?

This workbook is specifically targeted toward those who are engaged in some way with the transformation of mainstream – or what we might call 'whitestream'[1] – higher education institutions/ systems, and therefore it is not applicable to every context, or every kind of struggle for change.

It can be useful for individuals as well as those involved in institutions of higher education that have both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, students, faculty, and community members. However, the primary audience is non-Indigenous people/groups, who make up the majority at higher education institutions in Canada and the US. There is important work that non-Indigenous people need to do in order to approach decolonization work in more accountable, humble, self-reflexive, and critically-informed ways. Indigenous peoples do not need to be present to witness non-Indigenous people building capacity and un-knotting harmful individual and collective patterns, assumptions and habits. These forms of processing are extremely important, but can be harmful and retraumatizing for Indigenous peoples to witness, and also create more labour for them.

That said, the work that is supported by a text like this is only one small part of the decolonizing process. Ultimately, we will not be able to read our way out of colonization. At some point, it becomes necessary to put this work into practice and take risks in shared spaces. As we noted earlier, having done some of this capacity building and un-knotting work beforehand is not a guarantee that nothing will go wrong in these shared spaces, but rather that when tensions, conflicts, or misunderstandings inevitably arise, non-Indigenous peoples might be better prepared to notice, name, and work through difficult, uncomfortable, and uncertain situations in more sober, accountable, non-defensive, and self-implicating ways. In this way, building one's capacity to show up differently enables the possibility of maintaining and deepening respectful and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous people.

Holding Space for Your Own Internal Complexities and Contradictions: The "Bus" Methodology
As we note above, decolonizing work is not simply intellectual. It is also affective and relational. We have found that this affective and relational work requires developing the capacity to sit with our own internal complexities, contradictions, and incoherences. In this way, we can develop the capacities and dispositions to become more comfortable with the complexities, contradictions, and incoherences of others, and the world itself. Together this might make us better prepared to hold space for difficult conversations that include elements of conflict, dissensus, and incommensurability, which contrasts with mainstream imperatives to emphasize consensus, sameness, and harmony.

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[1] We borrow the term "whitestream" from Sandy Grande (2004). She defines it as something that is not only dominated by white people, "but also principally structured on the basis of white, middle-class experience, serving their ethnopolitical interests and capital investments" (p. 125).

However, the capacity for holding our complexities, contradictions, and incoherences is generally underdeveloped among those socialized in Western institutions, as these institutions tend to prioritize coherence, certainty, and objectivity, and at the same time, dismiss and denigrate the affective dimensions of (un)learning. To support the development of these capacities, the Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures collective created the "bus" methodology, which we review briefly here.

The bus methodology is rooted in a metaphor premised on the notion that each of us has multiple different 'passengers' within us. The bus challenges the notion that we are or should be coherent in the way we think, feel, and act. While usually there is only one "driver" of the bus at a time, different passengers will make themselves known through their different thoughts, ideas, and affective responses to different stimuli. Usually we are already somewhat familiar with the passengers (and potential drivers) who are closer to the front of the bus, and less familiar with those closer to the back.
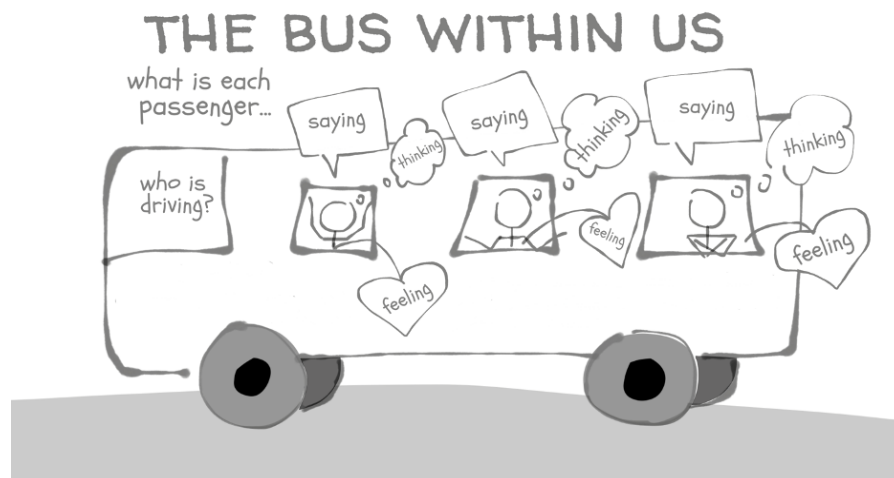

Figure 2: The Bus Methodology for developing the capacity to hold our complexities, contradictions, and incoherences

To use the bus methodology, we invite people first to learn to sit with and observe the different passengers on their bus. We tend to suppress those passengers that embody our shadow sides. For instance, for people who see themselves as committed to decolonization work, the suppressed passengers will be those deeply attached to desires or entitlements that we know are harmful and colonial. For instance, these desires might include the desire to affirm Canada's role as a benevolent, peacekeeping global power, or the desire to assume that change happens in a linear way towards a shared 'forward' or notion of progress. However, the invitation of the bus methodology is to become familiar with, and accept (without endorsing), all of the passengers within ourselves: "the good, the bad, the ugly, and the broken." The more we know about our passengers, the better able we are to consider how they impact ourselves and others, and perhaps recalibrate them and how they express themselves (rather than try to repress them by denying or minimizing their existence). Ultimately, this can support us to decentre our egos, deactivate our presumed entitlements and exceptionalism, disarm our defenses, and declutter or de-amplify our harmful desires and projections.

Throughout this book, especially when you are starting to feel affectively overwhelmed (e.g. uncomfortable, defensive, angry), we invite you to pause and observe which passengers are emerging

and how they are responding to the situation—accepting their presence and their responses without judgement, endorsement, or attachment. In these moments, you can ask yourself: Who are three passengers that are making themselves known right now? Then subsequent questions: What are they saying, thinking and feeling? Do each passengers' feelings align with their thoughts, or are they somewhat contradictory? Are they responding from a place of fragility, trauma, or insecurity? What are they projecting onto others? How old are they? How comfortable are they with uncertainty? What is surprising about which passengers emerged and what they felt or said? How do the passengers interact with each other? What does each passenger need (and how does this differ from what they might want)? You can also ask more general questions about the state of your bus. For instance: Is the bus processing, or is there something 'burning' that needs to be expressed, or even 'vomited' (when roads get rough)? If so, how and with whom is it appropriate to vent or vomit (who can 'hold the bucket' without being harmed in the process)? What processing can be done on one's own?

There are many other layers and possibilities for working with one's bus, but here we emphasize that becoming more familiar with our buses can support us to develop more space, stamina, and capacity to hold the tensions, dissensus, plurality and conflict that tend to arise in decolonizing work, and address them in more generative ways. In this way, we might begin to disinvest affectively from a violent colonial system and its promises – which is distinct from intellectually having a critique of, disagreeing with, or understanding the harmful costs of that system and its promises. And ultimately, we can learn to discern what needs to be done in order to ensure that decolonization continues to move. This requires discerning and honouring the distinction between *what we want to do*, and *what needs to be done*; decolonization is an invitation to disinvest from our perceived entitlement to the former (unrestricted autonomy), and to show up in order to engage the latter (accountable autonomy), without heroism, protagonism, or self-promotion.

You can learn more about the bus metaphor here: https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/the-bus/

Chapter 2: The Colonial Past and Present of Higher Education

What is Colonialism?
Before we go any further, we should clarify what we mean when we say 'colonialism'. This is particularly important because we have noticed a growing tendency to use colonization as a synonym for oppression, and decolonization as a synonym for social justice. This erases the specificity of colonization as a form of domination. However, we note that colonialism as an oppressive structure, logic, and set of relationships overlaps with other forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, exploitation, and ecological extraction. Each of the logics that underlie these oppressions are highly interrelated, and ultimately, we cannot address these as distinct or in piecemeal ways. Some of the activities in this book might be useful for addressing those oppressions as well. For instance, there are parallels between institutional decolonization efforts that reproduce colonial patterns and institutional anti-racism efforts that reproduce racist patterns.

Colonization occurs when an external power asserts governing authority over a group of people — their lives, lands, and 'natural resources'. (We use quotes here because what are called 'natural resources' in Western onto-epistemologies generally are understood as living beings and relations within Indigenous onto-epistemologies; describing these as resources naturalizes the commodification of life.) While this is a basic definition of colonization as a political and social practice, we note that there are many ways of defining and diagnosing it. In this workbook, we focus on a specific form of colonization known as settler colonialism, which is premised on the systemic and ongoing dispossession and occupation (settlement) of Indigenous lands by non-Indigenous peoples.

Settler colonialism in places like Canada and the U.S. encompasses the forceful establishment and ongoing hegemony of colonial systems of government that were and are intended to replace Indigenous peoples, and in many cases eliminate them altogether.

Other forms of colonialism include metropole or exploitation colonialism, in which colonizing powers extract the labour and resources of a foreign population, but do not seek permanently to settle their lands in large numbers. There is also neocolonialism, which refers to more indirect/informal colonial interventions and influences in never-colonized, or formally decolonized, countries. It is important to note that these different forms of colonialism are not mutually exclusive in any particular context.

Below we briefly review the different systems that make up the whole of a settler colonial system. We also review the often invisibilized costs of each of these systems, in parentheses. This includes the:
- *political system of the settler nation-state* (which is premised on the ongoing occupation of Indigenous lands and other forms of state-sanctioned violence, including policing, incarceration, border imperialism, and global militarism);
- *economic system of capitalism* (which is reproduced through racialized and gendered forms of exploitation; and exploitation of humans, as well as extraction of other-than-human beings);
- *epistemological system of universal knowledge* (which requires the suppression of other knowledges and reduction of knowledge as a means to index and control the world);
- *ecological system of extractivism* (which is reproduced through the endless consumption of finite 'natural resources' for human use); and,
- *relational system of individualism and inequality* (which is premised on separations and hierarchies that, among other things, position: humans above other-than-human beings and the

earth itself [anthropocentrism]; white people above racialized and Indigenous peoples [white supremacy]; and cisgender men above people of other genders [patriarchy]).

Western Universities' Origins in Genocide and Epistemicide
Long before any European colonizer arrived in what is currently Canada and the U.S., Indigenous peoples had their own forms of education. Today, Indigenous peoples continue to sustain these other forms of education, despite the attempted erasure of Indigenous knowledges and practices. As Blair Stonechild (2006) notes, prior to colonization, Indigenous peoples "undertook lifelong pursuit of specialized knowledge in order to become hunters, warriors, political leaders, or herbalists" (21). It is often forgotten in most histories of higher education that the modern Western-style university is only one, particular, historically-specific mode of higher education; there were many other forms of education that preceded it, that continue to coexist with it, and that are viable beyond it, but that remain currently unimaginable for most who have been socialized within modern schools.

Ramon Grosfoguel (2013) documents how the modern Western university was spread throughout the world and became the 'common sense' model of higher education through processes of crowding out or crushing other forms of knowledge (epistemicide) through processes of colonization and slavery (genocide). In particular, the institutions that were founded in the settler colonial outposts that eventually became what are today known as the U.S. and Canada were and remain deeply entangled in processes of racial, gender, and colonial violence at both the epistemic and material levels.

As Craig Steven Wilder (2013) describes in his history of early U.S. higher education, "American colleges were not innocent or passive beneficiaries of conquest and colonial slavery. The European invasion of the Americas and the modern slave trade pulled peoples throughout the Atlantic world into each others' lives, and colleges were among the colonial institutions that braided their histories and rendered their fates dependent and antagonistic" (11). Since their beginnings in the 17th and 18th centuries, universities in the U.S. and Canada have continued to benefit from and contribute to the reproduction of unsustainable colonial societies premised on ongoing exploitation, occupation, dispossession, and extraction. Indigenous and Black people also have resisted the violence of universities both within and beyond their walls, including in some cases through efforts to breach those walls, to transform them from within, and in other cases, to tear them down completely.

It is difficult to challenge dominant narratives that assume the benevolence and innocence of colleges and universities, as many people view these institutions as sites of social change and moral leadership. Even those who are critical of these institutions are often attached to their promises of equal opportunity, progress, and social mobility. Yet like all institutions in colonial societies, institutions of higher education are entangled with systemic, historical, and ongoing colonial violence and ecologically unsustainable systems; their funding streams, real estate, political legitimacy, epistemic authority, and social relevance are all dependent on the continuity of this violence. Thus, part of the work of decolonization is de-romanticizing our imaginaries of higher education so that we can have a clearer understanding of the ways that these institutions reproduce harm in their everyday relationships and practices. And to consider the ways that our lives and livelihoods as students, staff, and faculty working and studying in these institutions are also implicated in this harm.

The Mainstreaming of Decolonization
As Cash Ahenakew (2016) notes, "The denial and denigration of non-Western ways of knowing has been part and parcel of European colonialism and a primary means by which the universality of Western knowledge was asserted…and used as a justification for the dispossession, destitution, and genocide of

populations who were perceived to be lacking knowledge of universal worth (but who occupied lands of strategic importance)" (p. 327). Indigenous peoples have long challenged this supposed universality of western ways of knowing and being, and called whitestream institutions of higher education to account for their role in epistemicide and other modes of colonization. Over the past several years, thanks to these persistent efforts as well as the larger landscape of reconciliation in Canada (which was also initially led by Indigenous people), and various intersecting movements for social justice in the U.S., decolonization has become an area of greater interest for many institutions.

Several colleges and universities have made public commitments to recruit more Indigenous students and faculty, include Indigenous knowledges in curricula, improve relationships with local Indigenous communities, and educate the wider campus and the public about colonial histories. However, as Michael Marker (2019) notes, higher education institutions "continue to be contested zones characterized by dominating economic and cultural pressures that still exert a centrifugal force to marginalize and resist Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems" (p. 501).

Indigenous students, faculty, staff, and communities have expressed frustration that institutional commitments have often turned out to be empty, temporary, or tokenistic. Meanwhile, non-Indigenous responses vary widely: from a genuine desire to deeply examine individual and institutional complicity in ongoing colonial violence, to an enthusiastic but tokenizing, appropriative, or romanticizing embrace of Indigenous knowledges, to a firm resistance to the legitimacy or value of Indigenous knowledges, Indigenous ways of knowing, and Indigenous knowledge holders. In this context, many staff, students, and faculty – Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike – are uncertain about how to proceed with the immense task of pushing universities, and those of us who work and study within them "to truly reckon with their role in reproducing colonial dispossession and violence in the present" (Daigle, 2019, p. 714). Others question whether the decolonization of existing universities is even possible, and thus whether it is a worthwhile goal in which to invest time and energy.

Different Approaches to Decolonizing Higher Education
We approach this workbook recognizing that there are many ways of framing, imagining, and enacting the decolonization of higher education. This ranges from those who seek to stop or even reverse decolonization efforts, to those who believe that existing institutions of higher education are so deeply colonial that they can never be decolonized. Below, we briefly present these different possible frameworks (adapted from Andreotti, Stein, Ahenakew & Hunt, 2015):

Table 1. Different approaches to decolonization in higher education

Approach to reform	Approach to decolonization in higher education	Implications for practice
Regressive reform	Decolonization is a dangerous threat to institutional values	Actively work to impede/challenge/reverse decolonization efforts in an effort to protect existing systems of privilege and inequality
No reform	Decolonization is not a desirable (or perhaps even legible) project	N/A (ignore calls for decolonization or otherwise deny their relevance)
Minor reform	Decolonization is increased access to existing institutions and promised benefits, inclusion into mainstream	Transform institutional policies and practices to provide additional resources to Indigenous students and faculty so as to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and capital to excel according to institutional standards; celebrate Indigenous perspectives; offer intercultural competency training to non-Indigenous staff, faculty, students
Major reform	Decolonization is recognition, representation, redistribution, reconciliation, redress	Center and empower communities and perspectives; ensure more equitable processes of resource distribution in consideration of systemic, historical, and ongoing marginalization/ dispossession/subjugation/occupation
Beyond reform	Decolonization will likely require "the end of higher education as we know it", because existing institutions are so deeply colonial	Mitigate harm, redistribute resources, create and protect spaces for decolonial engagements in the short-term; in the long-term, mobilize what might be possible beyond what is currently imaginable and viable within existing institutions of higher education

We note that while this map of approaches to decolonizing higher education is not exhaustive, it captures some of the most common approaches. In this workbook, we primarily seek to hold space for people who are interested in minor, major, and beyond reform approaches, and who are looking to deepen their practice within or across these areas by developing the capacity to work through complexity, uncertainty, contradiction, and complicity. At the same, we emphasize that these approaches do not hold equal institutional power. While many institutions, and individuals within them, still refuse to acknowledge or accept the imperative for decolonization (i.e. no reform), the minor reform approach to decolonization is becoming increasingly common. Meanwhile, major reform approaches can be found at the margins of some institutions, and the beyond reform approach remains largely unintelligible apart from within a few precarious institutional cracks, and thus often takes place in those liminal spaces of the institution or in non-institutional spaces.

In addition to attending to the differential power of these different approaches, we also want to encourage vigilance around potential backlash against decolonizing efforts, which might further embolden those already advocating for regressive reform. For those of us engaged in this work, we need not only to anticipate and prepare for this possibility, but also to respond in a way that protects the most systemically marginalized from becoming the primary targets of this backlash.

There are different ways of engaging with this map of decolonization, but as a starting point, you can ask yourself some basic questions in relation to the minor, major, and beyond reform approaches:

- What are the assumptions, investments, and desires behind each approach to decolonization? Where do each of these come from? Where do they lead?
- What does each approach bracket or erase in order to ensure its own coherence?
- What might decolonization look, feel, smell, and taste like in each of these approaches? Are some approaches easier to imagine or 'sense' into than others? If so, why?
- Where am I located in this table, most of the time? Where would I like to be?
- Where is my institution, department, or office located? Where would I like it to be?
- What might be some of the barriers or challenges to shifting approaches?
- How might different approaches to reform be useful or important in different contexts?
- How can we have difficult conversations across these different approaches to decolonization, without relationships falling apart?

Contextual Interventions

While each of us is probably more partial to some of the approaches to reform in this map than others, generally people, policies, and practices are not statically positioned within one approach, but rather move within and between them depending on a number of conditions. In this workbook we encourage people to identify possibilities for strategic, accountable interventions within their own contexts, rather than only seeking out spaces that already align with one's preferred approach.

In encouraging this work, we emphasize the direction, rather than the destination, of decolonization efforts; the movements that are enabled by those efforts, rather than by the fixed form they take; and the quality and integrity of relationships that those efforts enable, rather than the quantity. There is no universal formula or blueprint for the practice of decolonization, as it always depends on what is and is not intelligible, contextually relevant and viable in a particular space. The same action or argument can have very different impacts, depending on where and how it is used, by whom, and toward what ends. However, we suggest that the underlying orientation should always be toward deepening responsibility, and interrupting and reducing harm.

Take, for instance, the increasingly widespread practice of offering land acknowledgements at the beginning of public events. Many have observed that this practice has become a largely performative, tokenistic gesture that rarely reflects substantive individual or institutional shifts, and rarely affects the content of the presentation that follows (Cornum, 2019; Vowel, 2016). We have observed many such land acknowledgements; however, we have also heard powerful land acknowledgements that bring attention to these very risks and challenge people to consider the implications of ongoing occupation, especially their own complicity in colonial violence. Elsewhere, in institutions where land acknowledgements remain rare, we have seen them unsettle those present in what could be the first step toward more substantive engagements. In other words, land acknowledgements as a form of decolonial intervention are neither intrinsically tokenistic, nor intrinsically transformative; what matters is the movement they enable – or not, if they simply serve to keep colonial patterns in place.

This workbook can support people to develop the intellectual dexterity, affective radars, and sense of relational accountability to discern what kinds of intervention might move people and groups that have become stuck in colonial patterns. In light of analyses that suggest the inherently colonial nature of modern universities, we are agnostic about the question of whether existing institutions can ever be decolonized. Indeed, it may very well be impossible for institutions to "right the wrongs that brought

them into being" (Belcourt, 2018). Nonetheless we suggest that engaging in decolonizing work (without projections about its outcomes) is important as it has the potential to:
- Result in the reduction of immediate harm;
- Secure (provisional, circumscribed) space within the institution for grappling with the impossibilities of decolonization and their implications; and,
- Redirect resources towards Indigenous people and communities.

There is much to be learned from the process of trying to decolonize higher education, whether or not every effort 'succeeds.' Indeed, sometimes the greatest learning comes in moments of failure, if these moments are approached with honesty and humility. In some cases, allowing oneself to see the humour of these failures, especially when it means laughing at ourselves, can also prevent non-generative spirals of shame and guilt. Nonetheless, at the same time that we want to honour and emphasize the complex process of learning in the decolonization process, we also seek to activate in people a sense of responsibility that prompts them to consider, "Who is bearing the cost of my learning, and how can this labour be better acknowledged, rewarded, and distributed?"

Different Layers of Accountability in Decolonization
Colonization is reproduced in higher education not only because of individual ignorance about institutions' colonial histories, and institutions' structural entanglements with the wider colonial system, but also because of people's systemic (often unconscious) desires for, and investments in, the promises that colonization offers, including security, certainty, prosperity, authority, progress, and exceptionalism. If this is the case, then intellectual accountability is just one of many relevant dimensions of accountability when it comes to decolonization in higher education. In addition to intellectual accountability, we emphasize in this workbook affective and relational accountabilities, while also gesturing toward historical, political, economic, and ecological accountabilities.

Below, we offer some introductory questions that can prompt deepened examinations of different layers of accountability in relation to the decolonization of higher education at the individual and institutional levels (adapted from Stein, 2020). These are only a handful of the possible questions that could be asked about each dimension. One way to approach these questions is by trying to actually answer them and thereby amass more information about institutional complicity at an intellectual level. However, another way of approaching these questions is at a meta-level – observing yourself engaging them – for instance: Which questions might I already have the answers to, and where did I learn them? For the ones that I don't have the answers to, what has enabled that socially sanctioned ignorance? Which questions are most relevant to my own institutional work and thus most significant for me to consider? What are my affective, embodied responses to these questions? What are the passengers on my bus saying, thinking, and feeling? What am I learning from those responses about my relationship (and attachments) to colonialism? How do these questions prompt me to think/act differently, or not, regarding my responsibility for decolonization?

Intellectual accountability
- How do Western epistemic foundations continue to shape most universities' and colleges' curriculum, research, and administrative organization, and how do these foundations affect the reception of and resources allocated to Indigenous peoples and knowledges?
- How are Indigenous critiques of eurocentrism in curriculum and research received (e.g. ignored; attended to in earnest; engaged in selective and instrumentalizing ways)?
- What institutional white middle-class sensibilities and norms prevent Indigenous knowledges from thriving on their own terms (e.g. productivity requirements that do not account for the

time required to produce knowledge in/with Indigenous communities; failure to recognize forms of knowledge production/transmission/translation beyond traditional scholarly publishing; rewarding ambition and individual self-promotion, which goes against many Indigenous values oriented by interdependence, collaboration, and humility; or failure to recognize that some knowledge is not meant to be open and accessible to all)?
- What institutional values and frameworks of value and evaluation would need to be rethought in order to affirm the equality and integrity of Indigenous knowledges?

Affective accountability
- How do I react when someone suggests that my ideas or actions reproduce colonialism? Am I defensive, or am I open to being held accountable for my (inevitable) mistakes?
- Do I know how to sit with the implications of my complicity in colonial violence without running away from it, disidentifying with it, or seeking immediate absolution for it?
- Can I surrender my desires for control, authority, certainty, and security so that I might develop the humility, patience, and stamina that are required for decolonial work?
- Am I willing to put in the difficult, uncomfortable work that is required in order to face my complicity in colonialism and transform existing colonial relations?

Relational accountability
- Is there a relationship between the institution and local Indigenous community/communities? If so, what is the quality of that relationship? Who sets the terms of that relationship? How is power distributed within that relationship?
- To what extent are relationships between the university and Indigenous communities premised on the principles of trust, consent, accountability, and reciprocity (Whyte, 2020)?
- Is the institution prepared to acknowledge that learning takes place in many different places, not only within its walls? Does the institution truly respect the gifts and wisdom of those other traditions and knowledge keepers? Is it prepared to offer support (financial and otherwise) to and collaborate with educators from other knowledge traditions?
- Are non-Indigenous people expecting Indigenous people to engage in (intellectual, emotional, pedagogical) labour that should be their own responsibility (Ahmed, 2012)?
- What are settlers expecting to hear when Indigenous communities or collaborators speak, and are they able to 'hear' Indigenous people when they deviate from that script?

Historical accountability
- By what processes did the land on which the institution sits come to be held by the institution? Who (including humans and other-than-human beings) was and continues to be negatively affected by those processes? How are we accountable for those processes?
- What has been the historical relationship between the institution and Indigenous peoples and knowledges, and how has this relationship shifted across time (or not)?
- What has been the historical relationship between the settler colonial education system more broadly (K-12) and Indigenous peoples, and how does this impact higher education?
- How does the historical development of higher education in the country relate to (and support or contest) the development and dominance of a settler society?
- How might histories of higher education shift if they attended to forms of higher education beyond the Western university? Who benefits from forgetting certain histories, and what are the common responses when we try to remember differently?

Political accountability
- To what extent are local Indigenous communities a genuine (non-tokenistic) part of institutional decisions related to issues of land (e.g. new construction projects)?
- In what ways do universities contribute to the political socialization of settler citizens who presume the inevitability of the settler colonial nation-state?
- Do institutional engagements with questions of colonialism name and seek to interrupt ongoing unequal power between Indigenous and white settler individuals and communities?

Economic accountability
- How are private *and* public sources of funding for higher education derived (directly and indirectly) through colonial dynamics (e.g. commodification of Indigenous lands, including through the extraction of 'natural resources' from those lands)?
- How do colleges and universities contribute to the reproduction of an extractivist capitalist economy by preparing people to be labourers and consumers within it?
- What are the origins of the wealth from which institutional endowments and other forms of wealth emerge? In what are those endowments, staff pensions, *et cetera* currently invested?
- How do universities derive profits from (Indigenous) lands for which they hold the title, and how does that 'development' contribute to the presumption that the land is 'settled'?

Ecological accountability
- How have colleges and universities been complicit in ecological destruction and greenhouse gas emissions, in both direct and indirect ways, and in both historical and ongoing ways?
- In what ways do colleges and universities naturalize the mainstream political economic system that is premised on endless growth and extraction on a finite planet?
- To what extent do institutions' 'sustainability efforts' interrupt business as usual?
- Do colleges and universities make the connection between colonial violence and ecological violence, and emphasize the importance of Indigenous perspectives on climate change?

Most decolonizing efforts will focus on one or two of these accountabilities; it is difficult if not impossible to address all of them at once. Particularly in higher education contexts it tends to be intellectual accountability that is most commonly invoked (to varying degrees of depth and commitment), often to the exclusion or marginalization of the others. However, we do not get to pick and choose which of these accountabilities are relevant to us; they all are. What we decide to do in relation to those accountabilities is another, more difficult question.

Chapter 3: Beyond Conditional Inclusion

Decolonization versus Inclusion

Decolonization is often interpreted as simply being another form of inclusion. However, to frame decolonization as inclusion is to identify the primary wrong of colonization as the exclusion of Indigenous peoples from supposedly universal mainstream institutions, knowledges, and sensibilities. Hence, inclusion is framed as the primary means to right that wrong. Further, those who are 'included' are expected to be grateful for being included, and to adapt to existing social and institutional norms; indeed, their continued inclusion is conditional upon them doing so. Meanwhile, decolonization (broadly speaking) identifies the primary 'wrongs' of colonialism as the dispossession of Indigenous lands, the attempted elimination of Indigenous peoples, and the violation of relationships (between humans as well as between humans and other-than-human beings) premised on consent, trust, accountability, and reciprocity (Whyte, 2020). From this perspective, "universities continue to be complicit" in the ongoing violence of colonization both on and off campuses (Daigle, 2019, p. 709).

If mainstream institutions are not only complicit in but also dependent on the settler colonial system for their continued existence, then the mere inclusion of Indigenous peoples (and knowledges) into those institutions will not unravel colonization. In fact, inclusion may only further fortify colonization by giving it a kinder, gentler facade. For those who are committed to interrupting colonial relations, desires, and habits of knowing and being in higher education, there is a need to move beyond mere inclusion, towards decolonization. At the same time, some inclusion efforts are extremely important for creating more space and opportunities for Indigenous students and scholars, and otherwise reducing immediate colonial harm; further, some decolonization efforts might be impossible, at least in the immediate future. Thus, we suggest the need to identify and mobilize the contingent decolonial possibilities within any institutional context in ways that interrupt colonial patterns, protect provisional spaces for Indigenous peoples and knowledges, and open opportunities for imagining and enacting higher education otherwise. At the same time, we need to remain attentive to the limits of institutional transformations that depend on the continuity of an underlying colonial system.

Conditional Inclusion

Many institutional 'decolonization' efforts operate according to a formula of: *(Business as Usual) + (Non-Threatening Indigenous Content) - (Guilt and Risk of Bad Press)* (Jimmy, Andreotti & Stein, 2019).

In this way, unexamined, seemingly benevolent practices tend to reproduce the same affective and performative investment patterns that characterize colonial relations.

Especially when decolonization is interpreted as 'inclusion,' those who are 'being included' remain objects of difference who are conditionally invited into the institution by those who retain the power to make, rescind, and deny that invitation. Here, the underlying colonial conditions through which the university operates remain unnamed and untouched (e.g. located on dispossessed Indigenous lands, funded through an extractive colonial capitalist economy, managed through a combination of Western economic rationality and democratic deliberation among mostly non-Indigenous people, and reflective of patriarchal and white middle class norms, values, and forms of leadership).

In fact, inclusion can actually renaturalize existing institutional infrastructures. Not only does it appear to 'right' the wrongs of exclusion, thus restoring the institution to a position of moral legitimacy and benevolence, but it can also foreclose or delegitimize further critiques. Thus, institutions can claim to be against colonization in ways that shield them from future critiques of their ongoing colonial actions. Meanwhile, Indigenous people who voice their objections or ask for more substantive change are dismissed as being "ungrateful," "stuck in the past," and therefore "standing in the way of progress."

Within these conditional forms of inclusion, Indigenous peoples and knowledges are also generally presumed to be less deserving than others, so their inclusion is understood as a concession on the part of the institution that creates a perceived debt on the part of those who are included. For instance, because of this debt, Indigenous people are expected not only to adapt themselves to existing organizational cultures, but also to advocate for their communities in ways that are not required of their white peers, and to do so in ways do not make white peers feel uncomfortable.

This means that Indigenous peoples are expected to do the following:
- meet dominant, Eurocentric norms of scholarly value, rigour, and impact, as well as Indigenous nation-specific notions of value, rigour, and impact;
- affirm the benevolence of those who included them;
- remain silent about continued colonial relations within the institution and about the institution's historical and ongoing complicity with colonization in the wider society;
- serve as the 'token' Indigenous representative on numerous department and university committees;
- have their scholarship reviewed by 'peers' who are in many cases not Indigenous and not familiar with Indigenous literatures and worldviews;
- compromise their commitment to their communities in order to adhere to individualized notions of scholarly success;
- 'translate' Indigenous knowledges in ways that are intelligible in Western frames;
- perform the 'safe'/non-threatening dimensions of their Indigeneity, and avoid 'politicized' critiques; and
- consent to be instrumentalized – e.g. by posing in branding materials that promote institutional commitments to Indigenization.

The following poem by Cash Ahenakew (which first appeared in Ahenakew, 2016) captures the impossible position that Indigenous faculty are placed in. We invite you to read the poem and then identify three passengers on your 'bus' and observe what they are thinking and feeling in response.

Academic Indian
have to know
western knowledge and education
plus the critique of
western knowledge and education

have to know
indigenous 'culture' and education
plus the critique and the critique of the critique of
indigenous 'culture' and education

have to know

how to embody expected authenticity
and how to embody expected critique
of expected authenticity

have to know
when and where to use indigenous literature
and when and where to use the Western canon
to build legitimacy and credibility for indigenous thought and experience

have to know
when to vilify, to romanticize, to essentialize
when to apologize, to complexify, to compromise
when and who to be accountable to and why

have to know
how to reject modernity, how to be a modern Indian
how to ignore contradictions
how to deny incommensurabilities

have to know
when and how to perform at the same time
competence, confidence, boldness, heroic rebelliousness
and humility, compliance and gratitude for the opportunity

have to know
how to respond to (or hide from)
'allies' seeking self-affirmation and redemption
through helping you and your community

have to know
how to be an intellectual, an activist, a therapist, and an entrepreneur
how to improve retention, attrition, and social mobility
and how to stop exploitation and ecological disaster

have to know
how to educate "my people," liberal allies, immigrants, red necks, colleagues
how to relate to gang members, business sponsors, elders, politicians
how to speak with the crows, the trees, the sea, and the media

have to know
languages lost and found of family, communities, earth, spirit
languages imposed of nation, property, individualism, competition
and institutional academic language of secular liberal humanism

have to know
how to indigenize and decolonize
disciplines, protocols, ethics, and methodologies
to make critical research feel good for non-indigenous people

have to know
how to package all of this in a foreign English language
to convince top ranked journals and performance analysts
that you, too, against all odds, have market value

have to know
how to live with the guilt of having credentials, a secure job
and the awareness of compliance with a rigged system
built on the broken back and wounded soul of your family members

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Even if Indigenous peoples disagree with or want to resist these imposed expectations, they might feel compelled to meet them in order to retain their positions, but also because they do not want "to forfeit opportunity of arguing and promoting the worth of Indigenous perspectives in environments that for so long have not sought such input" (Greenwood, de Leeuw, & Fraser, 2008, p. 200). What this effectively means is that Indigenous people are not permitted to be their whole, complex selves (Tuck, 2009), nor are they permitted to have their own scholarly and service agendas. Rather, they are expected to meet and serve the agenda of the institution. Further, even when Indigenous knowledges are invited into the institution, they often are decontextualized and forcibly translated into Western frames of reference in ways that betray their embeddedness in Indigenous modes of being.

Thus, even when they are 'included', Indigenous peoples and knowledges remain largely unintelligible and, ultimately, strangers inside the colonial institutions that are in many cases built on their own lands. Often, the benefits to the institution seem to outweigh the benefit to the Indigenous people and communities. This approach to 'decolonization' can therefore leave Indigenous faculty, staff, and students feeling disillusioned, frustrated, exhausted, and burnt out.

Disillusionment with Inclusion
We have identified a familiar cycle through which Indigenous peoples are initially, conditionally invited into a university, only to encounter the familiar colonial patterns. We summarize these patterns as the "8 Ds of Disillusionment with Inclusion," as they result in the disillusionment and burn out of all those involved, especially the Indigenous people who are most harmed by this circular colonial process.

In addition to describing each 'D', we offer an example of the kinds of messages that are being conveyed at the institutional level to Indigenous people, whether directly or implicitly.

The 8 Ds of Disillusionment with Inclusion

1. Deny: Before inclusion becomes a priority, institutions tend to operate in denial of the ways that they are structured by systemic, historical, and ongoing colonial violence. e.g. *"Colonialism is not a structural problem at our institution, especially not in the present."*
2. Desire: Once denial is no longer tenable – e.g. because an institution is critiqued for colonial actions – the move to inclusion tends to be oriented by institutional desires (e.g. to restore a positive 'brand') rather than by the needs of Indigenous communities. e.g. *"You have been included (on our terms) so we can justify the continuation of business as usual."*
3. Deficit: Because of enduring damage-centred and deficit-based colonial imaginaries (Tuck, 2009), Indigenous people enter the institution with a presumed lack, and thus are expected to 'prove' their worthiness to be there, and 'earn' the right to stay. e.g. *"You didn't earn your place here like the rest of us; you came in through the back door."*
4. Debt: Because of a perceived deficit, Indigenous inclusion is framed as a gift that creates a debt that must be repaid through loyalty and support for existing institutional agendas. e.g. *"You are only here because of the benevolence of those who invited you; you owe us."*
5. Doubt: When Indigenous people challenge 'business as usual' – for instance, by challenging Eurocentric ideas of scholarship or pointing out instances of colonialism, they become the object of suspicion and doubt about their worthiness to be included. e.g. *"You are making us think that we made a mistake letting you in the door."*
6. Discipline: If Indigenous people too strongly challenge institutional norms, they might be officially or unofficially disciplined, for instance by being surveilled or denied opportunities. e.g. *"You should be grateful to even be here, and not bite the hand that feeds you."*
7. Delegitimize: Often alongside discipline comes delegitimization efforts, in which the Indigenous person's concerns are dismissed as too sensitive or of having problems of their own making (i.e. victim blaming); their presence in the institution itself might also be delegitimized. e.g. "*By exposing the problem, you've become a problem* **–** *and you won't get away with it."*
8. Dismiss: Ultimately, if things cannot be resolved in a way that maintains 'business as usual', the issues raised by the Indigenous person may be dismissed as being unimportant, and the person themselves may be pushed out, if not outright dismissed. e.g. "*Your continued presence here is more of a hassle than it is worth, you create too much divisiveness."*
Deny: Once this cycle is complete, institutions may return to a state of denial in which they suggest they have done all they can to address colonialism, and deflect any blame for the 'failed' inclusion effort onto the Indigenous people who did not 'pay their debt'/meet expectations. The cycle will thus continue, until we can interrupt these patterns e.g. *"We've tried to help Indigenous people, it's not our fault if you don't want to be helped."*

Those who are operating from within a framework of inclusion will tend to repeat this circular colonial pattern, because they remain invested in an institutional futurity that requires the continuation of business as usual, and thus, the continuation of colonial relations. Ultimately, inclusion will be a limited strategy for institutional change because it fails to address the underlying colonial conditions of possibility that enable mainstream institutions to persist in their current form.

The distinction between conditional inclusion and deeper forms of decolonization can be very useful for identifying different kinds of hope, investments, and assumptions. However, strictly aligning oneself with one or the other and only engaging from that space, often motivated by a search for moral or political purity and coherence, can result in lost opportunities. Thus, at the same time that it is important to resist the naturalization of colonial futurities of higher education, there is a need to strategically navigate the available possibilities to mobilize change. Not all of these possibilities will be framed as decolonization, but they might nonetheless allow us to *move in this direction*.

For instance, just because inclusion is a limited framework, this does not mean that all efforts that fall under the heading of inclusion are not worthwhile. Particularly because inclusion is the dominant paradigm of institutional change, it is important to consider its strategic, harm-reducing potential, alongside other decolonizing work that goes beyond the inclusion paradigm and its limits.

Especially when inclusion efforts are thoughtfully executed – when they exceed simplistic and tokenistic 'checklist' approaches – they have been shown to improve Indigenous students' access, retention, and completion rates (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018; Pidgeon, 2016). Inclusion efforts can be used to leverage or at least create more space, resources, and legitimacy for engaging demands for deeper forms of institutional transformation. Indeed, shifting social critiques and political contexts have made the question of colonization more difficult for higher education institutions to ignore, even as mainstream engagements with this question tend to be co-opted back into existing agendas.

Depending on the particularities of one's context, positionality, and horizons of hope, there are a range of opportunities for engagement with inclusion-based institutional efforts beyond uncritical embrace. For instance, non-Indigenous peoples might engage in subtle subversions of the existing agenda (that accept the terms of the conversation, but seek to reorient its direction) or generative refusals (that challenge the terms of the conversation, and in doing so make visible what is absent, and perhaps open up different spaces for difficult conversations, even if only temporarily). It is important to keep in mind that certain interventions might be more approachable for certain people than others. For instance, non-Indigenous people—especially white people—are likely to receive less resistance if they name colonial patterns of engagement than when an Indigenous person does the same. Thus, it might be appropriate for them to take on this responsibility (with humility).

Taking a strategic approach requires us to map our responsibilities alongside what it is possible for each of us to do within our own contexts; it also requires us to recognize that, whatever way we decide to engage will likely be problematic, difficult, contradictory, and offer no guaranteed outcomes. In many cases, we don't know in advance how things will move; or we might simply recognize that a possibility can reduce immediate harm and alleviate suffering, even if it does not move in the direction of decolonization. We suggest the importance of developing strategic discernment and self-reflexivity for identifying and assessing opportunities for responsible engagements that might deepen social and ecological accountability, whether or not these opportunities are labeled as 'decolonization.'

At the same time, we should be careful not to conflate immediate strategic engagements with the long-term horizon of decolonization. And we remain accountable for what we have bracketed when we do the former, and for finding other ways to bring the latter back into the frame.

This might be a useful point to offer practices that can prepare non-Indigenous individuals in this work for the inevitable affective activation and unsettling that they will experience in public/ professional

spaces. That is, along this pathway you will be challenged, critiqued, and questioned in ways that can make you deeply uncomfortable—and face discomfort, uncertainties and contradictions you likely did not anticipate. If you are not used to being activated and unsettled in your professional (or personal) life, you may find yourself experiencing and performing fight, flight, freeze, or fawn reactions in unexpected ways. First, remember that although it may feel overwhelming, hurtful, and uncomfortable, these are not the same as experiencing trauma. Second, if this is new terrain for you, your affective responses might be quite intense. Having a strong affective reaction is often perceived as being weak, overly emotional, and even incompetent within the dominant culture of Western higher education. Our 'homework' can help us to develop stamina to stay with and be taught by these uncomfortable moments rather than run away; be more effective, present, and accountable in our strategic work; and show up differently in solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Doing our 'homework' will not prevent or disappear your affective responses in these situations; you will still be unsettled and activated. However, you will be able to better recognize what is happening, manage your somatic responses in the moment, and have strategies for releasing your activated state to transition back into a settled state. Then, you can show up again to do the necessary work.

Chapter 4: Redistributing the Labour of Institutional Change

Sometimes non-Indigenous people look to Indigenous people to lead decolonization efforts in higher education because they are rightly concerned about the risk of reproducing colonial patterns by having non-Indigenous people determine what decolonization looks like. However, this deference becomes non-generative when non-Indigenous people expect Indigenous people to shoulder the bulk of the affective, relational, and pedagogical labour of institutional and social change—labour that often goes unrecognized, and uncompensated. While it is vital that Indigenous perspectives are prioritized in decolonization, this is different than assuming Indigenous people should do all of the work. This work must be shared across Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. In this chapter we consider how we might activate non-Indigenous peoples' sense of responsibility for change in ways that are not rooted in guilt, shame, paternalism, or desires for absolution, affirmation, or innocence.

Troubling Dominant Desires for Decolonization
In the introduction, we noted the ways that many non-Indigenous people come to decolonizing work, in search of feeling good, looking good, doing good, and moving on. Below, we review the orienting concerns behind these desires, consider the harmful impacts of these desires, and propose a reorientation toward a more generative direction of decolonization.

Table 2. Reorienting problematic desires for decolonization

Orienting concern	Impact of this orientation	Possibilities for reorientation
Feeling good	Demands affective and relational labour of systemically marginalized people who are expected to suppress their feelings (especially "negative" ones) and manage/prioritize the feelings of the most systemically advantaged	Hold space and take responsibility for the full range of sensations (especially the painful and uncomfortable ones) that come with confronting one's complicity in a harmful system that has subsidized one's comfort, securities, and advantages
Looking good	Prioritizes (self-)image (how one wants to be seen by others), which results in sidestepping the actual (individual and collective) work to be done	Learn to laugh at oneself (especially when one is being ridiculous); focus less on being 'understood' and more on how we are relating and taking responsibility
Doing good	Focuses on the 'form' or content of one's actions, rather than on the movement they enable, including whether they reduce harm and enable new, healthier possibilities	Tune into what needs to be done, and then offer one's services at the intersection of what is needed and what one has the capacity to do (which is different than doing what one *wants* to do)
Moving forward	Dismisses concerns or critiques that question the dominant direction or pace of change (e.g. questions about who decides, in whose name, and for whose benefit); reproduces harmful patterns by rushing toward resolution without consent, respect, reciprocity	Learn to appreciate interruptions of "business as usual", and question the promise of a seamless, linear, universal direction of progress; focus on the integrity of the process and the quality of relationships built, rather than on the pace of change or the destination

Ultimately, interrupting each of these patterns will be necessary if we are to redistribute the labour of decolonial change so that it does not fall squarely on the backs of Indigenous people. We have found that there is a significant gap between people's intellectual ability to acknowledge these patterns in the abstract and their affective and relational abilities to identify and interrupt when they or others embody these patterns in action. The following exercise was written in an effort to draw attention to the disproportionate amount of intellectual, affective, and pedagogical labour that Indigenous people are expected to bear in the context of institutional decolonization and Indigenization efforts. In addition to addressing significant gaps in non-Indigenous people's knowledge and awareness of colonialism, it is generally expected that Indigenous people will hold space for non-Indigenous peoples' affective responses to learning about their complicity in historical, systemic and ongoing harm. This labour comes with significant emotional and physical costs for Indigenous people.

Why I Can't Hold Space for You Anymore, a self-examination exercise
(adapted from: https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/why-i-cant-hold-space-for-you-anymore/)

Instructions: Read the poem once all the way through. As you read, please pay attention to the different kinds of responses that it evokes in you (or in the passengers on your "bus"). After you have read the poem once, read the instructions that follow for the second part of the exercise.

Do You Really Want to Know Why I Can't Hold Space for You Anymore?

Because
You see my body as an extension of your entitlements

Because
I have held space for you before
and every time, the same thing happens
You take up all the space
and expect me to use my time, energy and emotion
in service of fulfilling your desires:
to perform my trauma
to affirm your innocence
to celebrate your self-image
to centre your feelings
to absolve you from guilt
to be always generous and generative
to filter what I say in order not to make you feel uncomfortable
to validate you as someone who is good and innocent
to be the appreciative audience for your self-expression
to provide the content of a transformative learning experience
to make you feel loved, important, special and safe
and you don't even realize you are doing it
and you don't even realize you are doing it
AND YOU DON'T EVEN REALIZE YOU ARE DOING IT

Because your support is always conditional
On whether it aligns with your agenda

On whether it is requested in a gentle way
On whether I perform a politics that is convenient for you
On whether it fits your personal brand
On whether it contributes to your legacy
On whether you will get rewarded for doing it
On whether it feels good
Or makes you look good
Or gives you the sense that we are 'moving forward'

Because when you 'give' me space to speak
It comes with strings attached about
what I can and cannot say
and about how I can say it
You want an easy way out
A quick checklist or one-day workshop
on how to avoid being criticized
while you carry out business as usual

And even when I say what I want to say anyway
You can't hear it
Or you listen selectively
And when you think you hear it
You consume it
You look for a way to say 'that's not me'
'I'm one of the good ones'
and use what I say to criticize someone else
Or you nod empathetically and emphatically to my face and then
The next thing you do shows that while you can repeat my words
Your perceived entitlements remain exactly the same

And when I put my foot down or show how deeply angry or frustrated I am
You read me as ungrateful, incompetent, unreliable and betraying your confidence
You complain behind my back that I'm creating a hostile environment
You say I'm being unprofessional, emotional, oversensitive
That I need to get over it
That I'm blocking progress
That I shouldn't be so angry
That I have a chip on my shoulder
That my ancestors lost the battle
That not everything is about colonialism or racism or whiteness
That aren't we all just people, in the end?
That we are all indigenous to some place
That you feel really connected to the earth, too
That you have an Indigenous friend/colleague/girlfriend that really likes you…
You minimize and further invisibilize my pain

Your learning
your self-actualization

your credibility
your security
and your social mobility
always come at my expense.
That is why I can't hold space for you anymore.

After you read the poem once, we invite you to read it again, this time focusing on observing your embodied responses. In this part of the exercise, we use a psychological narrative to focus your attention on the responses of your amygdala, which is the part of the brain that stores information about emotional events and that manages situations of perceived threat.

In modern societies, our brain is trained to minimize threat and maximize reward. If something is perceived as a threat to one's self-image, status, autonomy, or security, the amygdala is triggered, prompting responses of fight, flight, freeze and/or fawn (i.e. to please). As you read the poem again, identify the parts of yourself that are engaged in these patterns of response:

Table 3. Mapping patterns of response to perceived threats

fight (defensiveness)	flight (avoidance)	freeze (feeling lost and helpless)	fawn (trying to please)
● denying ● arguing ● explaining ● dominating discussion ● delegitimizing/ discrediting ● claim of being attacked ● claim of objectivity (only you can see the truth) ● insistence that it does not apply to you since you have Indigenous friends or family members that can attest that you are a nice person	● withdrawing ● getting distracted ● focusing on your intentions ● insisting you are misunderstood ● arguing over words meanings or other details ● offering counter-examples ● using other forms of oppression (e.g. class, sexism, cis-hetero-normativity) to minimize the importance of race & colonialism	● crying ● numbing ● deflecting ● exiting ● getting distracted ● changing the subject ● distancing ● detaching ● divesting ● despairing ● disconnecting	● seeking absolution ● self-flagellation ● martyrdom ● over-complimenting Indigenous people ● seeking proximity ● seeking praise ● virtue-signaling ● demanding attention ● demanding validation (e.g. "I am one of the good ones") ● pretending to go along to get along (or to protect your image/interests)

As you identify these responses in yourself (or in the passengers on your bus), try to document (in writing or drawing) how they manifest. Next, consider the fears, insecurities, and desires that could be behind these responses, and how these fears, insecurities, and desires could be unconsciously driving your actions and relationship building with Indigenous persons and communities.

Pause to consider:

- the costs of these patterns in the long run both for the well-being of Indigenous peoples and for the depth and sustainability of the relationships you build together;
- what you would need to unlearn to enable healthier and more generative relationships with Indigenous people and communities;
- how you might be expecting Indigenous people to hold space for your (un)learning and have patience with your inevitable mistakes;
- how this expectation places a demand on Indigenous people's time, labour, and generosity, and requires them to re-live painful and traumatic experiences and frustrations;
- how the labour that is expected of Indigenous peoples could be better acknowledged, rewarded, and better yet, (re)distributed in your institutional context.

Chapter 5: Some Questions for Getting Started

Throughout this book, we have offered several questions to help you think through practical, ethical, and educational dimensions and implications in the process of decolonization. In this chapter we offer a series of additional questions for you to think through as you begin this work. Sitting with these questions can prompt people to consider how their decolonization efforts might actually end up reproducing harmful colonial patterns of engagement, even if the intention is to do just the opposite.

These questions, adapted from questions that originally appeared in *Towards Braiding*, may help you think through your expectations, intentions, and the impact of your choices, and support you to think systemically about how these are rooted in a larger socio-historical context. We offer general questions for reflection and discussion, and also point to some "red flags" that commonly emerge and warrant pause for further consideration before starting (or continuing) decolonizing efforts in your context. These questions can be asked individually or as part of an organizational self-reflection.

Why are you or your institution/office/department undertaking the work of decolonization?
Begin by asking why you have decided to address decolonization in the first place. Where are your assumptions, investments, and intentions coming from? What you want, hope, and expect from decolonization will shape what outcomes are possible. In particular, they will significantly shape what you are able to hear, and not hear, and the sense you make of what you do hear. Do you want to deepen your understanding of colonialism, learn about/from/with other knowledge systems, and/or acknowledge or right past wrongs? Or perhaps you are motivated by some of the "red flag" reasons for decolonization such as:
- affirming your innocence, virtue, social or material capital, or credibility as a "good ally";
- making a benevolent gesture seeking redemption, forgiveness, or gratitude from Indigenous people;
- generating an alibi to draw upon when your organization comes under critique for colonial actions;
- enhancing your CV to become more employable; and
- meeting requirements to secure funding or employment stability.

These reasons for engagement (which are very common) are likely to recreate rather than interrupt colonial patterns.

Once you have thought about the expectations that are driving and shaping your desire for decolonization, then you might consider how you would respond if you were exposed to Indigenous perspectives, and other perspectives about de/colonization, that do not meet your expectations, projections, and desired outcomes. Please consider some important questions:

- What is lost in selectively engaging Indigenous perspectives and approaches to decolonization that will not challenge your expectations? What or who are you protecting by not engaging?
- What might be gained from loosening your expectations and opening up to other possibilities?
- What are the risks to the Indigenous people involved in both of these scenarios?
- What strategies do you have for noticing and interrupting your projections when they emerge?
- How can you try to ensure that your strategies do not create additional burdens for Indigenous peoples?

What kind of learning are you willing to do?
If the integration of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives into your institution/office/department is not going to reproduce colonial patterns, particularly the pattern of instrumentalizing Indigenous perspectives towards colonial agendas, then it will require a different approach to learning than many non-Indigenous people are used to. You might therefore ask: how much effort are you, and others in your institution/office/department, willing to put into your own learning (and unlearning)?

Indigenous communities and peoples are diverse. Institutions usually privilege perspectives that align safely with their objectives. For instance, institutions generally do not seek to engage communities fighting against pipelines. Institutions also tend to hire Indigenous people who embody familiarity in terms of middle-class language, logic, and sensibility, and in terms of normative bodies (e.g. white/light skin, thin, able-bodied). Knowing this, you might ask yourself and your organization:

- Do you want only an Indigenous perspective that is understandable from your point of view? Why might you be resisting perspectives that challenge your sensibility?
- How equipped are you to have difficult conversations without relationships falling apart?
- How do you usually respond to having your assumptions or innocence challenged in a workplace setting, or in general?
- How do you usually respond to being called out on harmful practices that are perceived as normal?
- How will you respond to Indigenous perspectives that may make you feel uncomfortable, guilty, rejected, and/or hopeless?
- Are you able to engage with and hold space for multiple, competing, or even contradictory Indigenous perspectives among Indigenous peoples?
- Individual Indigenous people, like all people, are also complex and contradictory. How might you more generatively and generously engage with and hold space for the full, complex humanity of the Indigenous individuals you work with?

Depending on your answers to these questions, it may be that your institution has not yet done the internal preparation work and self-study that are necessary for decolonization efforts to be generative and to create new possibilities for relationships rather than reproducing existing patterns of harm. If this is the case, do not be discouraged, but do recognize that there is important work to be done. That said, having "good" answers to these questions does not guarantee that mistakes will not be made and harms will not be reproduced. In some ways, having "good" answers at the beginning can be a "red-flag" on its own as most non-Indigenous people have been socialized in a manner that develops overconfidence in and overreliance on their intellectual understanding, which can leave one unprepared for the inevitable shock of affective activation and unsettling that often accompanies this work. Thus, continuous opportunities for self-reflexivity and honest feedback from both internal and external parties should be intentionally built into your organizational plan for engagement. We consider both the necessity and the challenges of creating these opportunities in the next section.

What are the hidden costs and labour involved in your decolonization efforts?
Indigenous people who work in higher education institutions often feel pressured to conform to the expectations of those who enabled the 'inclusion.' There is generally an implicit expectation that Indigenous people should feel grateful for being granted a space, and thus, they are considered ungrateful if they ask for more space; challenge how the space has been constructed; or say something that contradicts or challenges those who invited them. Thus, even when a space is nominally open to

different perspectives, some Indigenous people might feel compelled to keep their thoughts and concerns to themselves and go along with the dominant organizational logic. Out of respect for the relationship or concern for the backlash, other Indigenous people might say what they think those who invited them want or are readily able to hear. Still others might express their thoughts and concerns in ways that are less direct than is generally expected by non-Indigenous people, and they might therefore be misheard or misunderstood. Finally, some will be more direct about their concerns, and this directness will not always be well received. In order to reduce systemic harm, consider the following questions in relation to yourself and/or your organization:

- In what ways are you taking these complexities, power relations, and different modes of communication into consideration in your decolonization efforts, for instance, when you incorporate or invite 'Indigenous perspectives'?
- In what ways might you be 'listening' to Indigenous people in selective ways that prevent you from really 'hearing' what they are saying?
- What kinds of attachments and assumptions might be blocking you from hearing, how might these be related to/rooted in larger colonial patterns, and what is your plan for addressing these blockages, if any?
- What kinds of mechanisms or processes does your institution have in place for receiving and addressing critical concerns in ways that take them seriously and address them openly?
- Do you recognize that it may be only through long-term engagement and relationship-building that difficult and uncomfortable, but meaningful and important, conversations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people might become possible?
- Do you intend to develop such a long-term engagement, or are you more interested in a one-off transactional relationship?
- Is your intended form of engagement clear for all parties involved?
- To what extent are you instrumentalizing and/or appropriating Indigeneity for your own gain?
- To what extent could your gesture of inclusion be considered tokenistic or patronizing?

While Indigenous peoples are often saddled with the expectations presumed to come along with 'being included,' they also receive demands from their own communities. So, ask yourself:

- Why should Indigenous peoples prioritize your learning needs?
- How much would you pay for the time of an expert in your professional area, and are you paying the same for Indigenous expertise (especially those who are not already employed by the institution)?
- What do you intend to do with the Indigenous knowledge you engaged with?
- How can you engage ethically with this learning rather than treating it as an object of consumption?

If you think about the Western education system and its knowledge hierarchies, it takes at least 22 years of formal education to complete a PhD and be considered an expert in a subject area. In Indigenous communities, it also takes several decades for someone to master skills and no one is ever an 'expert', as everyone is continually learning until they die. It is very problematic for non-Indigenous people to take courses or to spend time in Indigenous communities and then to present themselves as 'experts' in the communities that they gained this (little) knowledge from. In the same way, for Indigenous people who claim their Indigenous identity later in life, or who can and choose to pass as non-Indigenous, it is also complicated to claim Indigenous spaces without having the experience of struggle, pain, and resilience that more disenfranchised Indigenous people embody. These complexities and tensions tend

to be difficult and even uncomfortable for non-Indigenous people to grapple with. However, they are likely to arise in the context of decolonization, and thus, it is important to be aware of them so that non-Indigenous people are prepared to respond appropriately when they do arise.

Are you committed to addressing the individual and group conflicts and anxieties that will probably arise in the process of decolonization?

If you are really committed to undertaking the difficult work of remaking and reimagining relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, then it is important to realize that this is not something that can happen overnight, but rather something that requires sustained effort, self-reflexivity, and critical generosity towards oneself and others. If you decide that this is a priority for your institution, then consider the following questions:

> •What practices of engagement might enable relationships to be maintained even in moments of conflict?
> • What strengths are present — or still need to be cultivated — in the organization that can enable difficult, relational work to happen and be shared across multiple people?
> • If you hear something that triggers you or makes you upset, what strategies and group dynamics might help ground you so that you can return to a more generative space, and how can you ensure these strategies do not rely on Indigenous peoples' emotional labour?
> • What kinds of human and financial resources is your institution willing and able to devote to this work?
> • Are you expecting immediate, clear results, and if so, what are the potential pitfalls of this expectation, and how might you frame this engagement differently?
> • How can you prepare yourself and your institution for the frustrations, anxieties, and mistakes that will inevitably arise in the process of strengthening non-Indigenous and Indigenous engagements?

Are you organizing the logistical dimensions of your Indigenous engagements with consideration of different sensibilities?

Institutions seeking to enact more ethical engagements with Indigenous people also need to take account of very practical considerations in ways that anticipate the needs and sensibilities of Indigenous speakers and participants, especially those who are not already part of the organization. In most whitestream colleges and universities, the logistical dimensions of inviting speakers or participants tend to be oriented implicitly around the norms and expectations of white, middle-class people. For instance, there is an assumption that people will have (easy access to) a bank account, regular access to the internet, reliable transportation (e.g. to get to a campus or an airport), and the financial reserves to pay for their travel in advance and then be reimbursed. Particularly when working with Indigenous elders and/or with Indigenous people who are living in more rural/reserve areas, these things should not be assumed. Thus, when working with Indigenous people, institutions should rethink these assumptions and act accordingly — for instance, by offering to pay honoraria or food stipends in cash (rather than by cheque); offering to arrange someone's door-to-door transportation in advance and on their behalf; ensuring that those who are traveling locally, but from a considerable distance, are offered overnight accommodation; and not delaying paying fees and reimbursements through institutional financial offices as this can severely affect the communities involved and impact trust and willingness for further engagements. Or, offer to hold meetings in the relevant communities.

Further, organizations should not wait until Indigenous speakers or participants request these things, but rather anticipate and offer them, as they might not necessarily voice their needs. In addition, especially when working with Indigenous Elders, institutions should task an employee or volunteer to

take responsibility for making sure that each elder is escorted to and from different locations, and that their needs are being anticipated and met by someone who is patient and comfortable with their sensibilities. Most organizations will develop agendas for meetings with tight timelines and constrain any involvement by Indigenous Elders to "openings" or land acknowledgements. While this may seem respectful, it is also considered tokenistic and inappropriate by many Indigenous peoples. Thus, aside from offering to hold meetings in relevant communities, institutions might consider collaboratively developing plans for meetings that include flexibility and adaptability to ensure respectful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge holders and a different view on the concepts of time and productivity.

Is your institution/office/department cognizant of the heterogeneity within Indigenous communities, and capable of engaging divergent perspectives?

Indigenous communities have always been heterogeneous. But beyond this internal complexity, colonial apparatuses have also operated in ways to further divide and separate community members. For instance, Indigenous people who live(d) on reserve have different experiences than those who live off; Indigenous peoples who are white-passing have different experiences than those who are read as visibly racialized; Indigenous peoples who come from middle-class families have different experiences than those who come from low-income families; Indigenous peoples who grew up speaking their language and/or having access to their ceremonies have different experiences than those who did not; and Indigenous peoples who grew up with their Indigenous family members have different experiences than those who grew up in non-Indigenous adoptive families, or in families where Indigenous heritage was minimized or hidden or only discovered or revealed later in the person's life.

None of these individuals is more or less Indigenous than the others, but at the same time, their experiences of Indigeneity cannot be conflated. Yet, in many cases, universities fail to recognize this complexity, or feel unequipped to engage with it, and thus they instead invite and expect a single Indigenous person to speak not only for their entire band, tribe, or nation, but also for all Indigenous peoples. This approach not only flattens the diversity and complexity of all Indigenous people, it also tends to reproduce selective, instrumentalized engagements with Indigenous perspectives. There is no prescriptive solution for how to consider the heterogeneity of Indigenous peoples, and in some cases relevant differences might relate to internal conflicts that communities would prefer to keep internal. At the same time, institutions have a responsibility to develop more sensitivity to these differences, and to think through their implications as much as possible in the process of decolonization, and particularly when working collaboratively with Indigenous communities. For instance, who decides who will be invited to participate, and why? Why do certain people tend to get invited and not others? Which Indigenous perspectives are present, and which are absent? What are the community's protocols for who participates and who is presented as a knowledge holder for a specific topic, or in relation to a specific institution or location within their traditional territory?

This also points to the importance of developing long-term engagements and relationships with Indigenous peoples so that these nuances can be considered and unraveled over time as trust is built, as well as the importance of having Indigenous people as staff and faculty who are already more sensitive to these nuances — and who are encouraged rather than punished for bringing them to the attention of non-Indigenous colleagues.

Bus Check-in

Pause. Take a breath. How is your bus responding to reading these questions? Observe (without judgement) at least three passengers and what the questions made them think, feel, and want to say.

What are you learning from your bus by observing the different passengers? What questions does it prompt you to ask about yourself or the process of decolonization that you had not asked before?

Chapter 6: Mapping Indigenous Engagements

Many individual and institutional engagements with Indigenous people and their ways of knowing and being are undertaken without adequate preparation or consideration of pre-existing socio-historical contexts and power dynamics that set the scene. There is often an assumption that if we simply approach these engagements with good intentions, then the process of healing broken relationships will flow naturally. This assumption leaves us unprepared for the difficult realities and tensions that tend to emerge at the interface of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. This lack of preparation in turn often leads to the reproduction of colonial harm, whether intentional or not.

There are many different ways of approaching engagements with Indigenous people, communities, knowledges, and practices, and very few of these approaches consider the difficult work that is required to create the conditions to truly interrupt harmful colonial patterns and to deepen accountability to and reciprocity with Indigenous communities. In this chapter, we review a map of some of these different possible approaches to engagement (see: https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/mapping-indigenous-engagements/).

	relationship with systemic, historical and ongoing colonial violence		
	(sanctioned) ignorance *of complicity in harm*	**awareness** *of complicity in harm*	**accountability** *as self-implication and commitment to harm interruption*
relationship with Indigenous ways of doing, knowing and being — *devaluation*	**pathologizing approach** (deficit theorization of Indigenous peoples)	**tokenistic approach** (e.g. tick-the-box land acknowledgement)	
appreciation	**appropriative approach** (spiritual or ecological bypassing of ethical-political responsibilities)	**additive approach** (selective inclusion of Indigenous content)	**virtue-signalling "ally" approach** (redistribution without depth of relationship)
accountability (harm interruption, respect, trust, consent, long term relationship)		**virtue-signalling "ally" approach** (relationship without privilege renunciation)	**"towards braiding" approach** (reverence without idealization; showing up differently)

very harmful	harmful	harm reduction	harm interruption
attachment to notion of settler superiority	self-interested cognitive engagement	selective affective answerability	visceral responsibility before will
active refusal of accountability for violence and denial of the worth of Indigenous knowledges	Indigenous content + business as usual; extraction and consumption of Indigenous knowledges	solidarity when convenient (makes one feel and look good)	commitment to difficult, painful, complex and complicated long haul process

Figure 3: Mapping approaches to engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing and being

Approaching Indigenous engagements in ways that can actually interrupt colonial harm takes a great deal of preparatory work in order to enable other forms of (non-colonial) relationships to become possible, let alone sustainable over the long-term. We have tried to map different approaches to engagements in consideration of two primary dimensions of concern. The first dimension is about one's **relationship with Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being**; the second dimension is about one's **relationship with systemic, historical, and ongoing violence**. In relation to these, we consider the extent to which different approaches amplify, reproduce, reduce, or interrupt harm.

The **most harmful** mode of engagement is rooted in a deficit-based and damage-centred approach to Indigenous communities that denies both settler complicity in harm and the value of Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being. Then, there is a set of approaches to engagement that do not overtly pathologize Indigenous peoples or defend settler supremacy, but that are nonetheless **harmful**. For instance, when Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being are devalued but there is some concern about complicity in harm, this often results in tokenistic and superficial gestures of Indigenous recognition. This might take the form of a land acknowledgement that is offered at the beginning of a public talk in a university in which the talk itself subsequently reproduces colonial assumptions or values, and fails to take account of the responsibilities and accountabilities that were mentioned in the acknowledgement. Conversely, one might have little awareness of or concern for complicity in harm, but feel an appreciation for Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being. This often results in the appropriation and consumption of Indigenous knowledges or practices. Such an approach to Indigenous engagement is common in new-age communities that selectively extract Indigenous spiritual practices, or ecological movements that instrumentalize Indigenous peoples and knowledges to advance their cause, but bypass their ethical and political responsibilities. Finally, one might have some concern about complicity and an appreciation of Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being, which often results in forms of conditional inclusion where certain Indigenous people and selected knowledges are included when they do not challenge the continuity of business-as-usual.

There are two possible modes of **harm reduction**. One mode moves from appreciation of Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being towards deepened accountability to Indigenous communities, but is still rooted in an awareness approach that emphasizes self-interested and affirmative modes of

engagement. This is an approach to engagement that remains on one's own terms, without ceding any privileges, authority, or autonomy – that is, doing what looks good to others and what feels good (affirming, redemptive, virtuous) to one's self rather than doing what actually needs to be done, which might be boring, difficult, or uncomfortable. The other possible mode of harm reduction has a deeper sense of accountability for complicity in colonial violence, but is still rooted primarily in appreciation rather than long-term relationship-building. Both of these approaches problematically centre the desires of self-proclaimed 'allies' whose work can nonetheless contribute toward reducing harm even though it also reproduces some colonial patterns.

The final possibility is that of braiding, rooted in accountability for complicity in colonial violence, *and* accountability to Indigenous ways of doing, knowing, and being. This kind of engagement can actually lead to the **interruption of harm** rather than merely its reduction, but it also takes significant effort in order to create the conditions for this kind of relationship to be possible. Accountability in this approach takes the form of unconditional solidarity that can hold space for complexities, paradoxes, frustrations, failures, pain, and conflict that are involved inevitably at the interface of communities in the long-term work of decolonization. This form of solidarity requires both humility and hyper-self-reflexivity so that we can show up to do the work that is needed rather than what is convenient and feels and looks good. This approach also requires going beyond the romanticizations and idealizations that are often projected onto Indigenous peoples, and instead having deep respect for their gifts while also holding space for their internal tensions, complexities, and heterogeneities. From this approach, we might gesture *towards braiding*, which we define as a practice *yet-to-come* located in a space in-between and at the edges of Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of knowing and being, aiming to calibrate each sensibility towards a generative orientation and inter-weave their strands to create something new and contextually relevant, while not erasing differences, historical and systemic violences, uncertainty, conflict, paradoxes and contradictions.

It is significant to note that within the confines of the colonial university, it is extremely difficult to find the time, space, and resources to work toward engagements that truly interrupt harm. Therefore, we encourage you to map in your own contexts which programs, policies, interventions, and attitudes are aligned with which approaches to engagement, so that you can better understand their risks and possibilities, and identify possibilities to reorient them toward deepened accountability. You can do this assessment on your own, with a small group of colleagues, or as a department or office.

Chapter 7: Tools for Sustaining Accountability

We have emphasized throughout this workbook that colonial patterns are reproduced not only through reasoned conviction and conscious intent, but also through unconscious or semi-conscious colonial desires and affective investments. Thus, while there is a need to identify and denaturalize current intellectual frames of reference, there is also an imperative to interrupt and create space for disinvesting from harmful affective desires and relational dispositions. Working at all these layers (and more) requires discernment, self-reflexivity, responsibility, and humility for deepened accountability. In this chapter, we offer a few tools to help keep us accountable when doing decolonizing work.

CIRCULAR
The CIRCULAR framework was developed as a means to identify and deconstruct common approaches to decolonial change that fail to interrupt colonial desires and perceived entitlements and exceptionalism, and instead reproduce them (adapted from Stein et al., 2020).

The intention with this framework is not to serve as a checklist for "what not to do"; nor is it intended to catalogue and condemn these circular patterns, or mobilize them in a competition for moral high grounds, but rather to invite scholars and practitioners of higher education to observe reflexively their own actions, analyses, and responses in relation to these patterns so as to potentially interrupt them and open up new possibilities for knowing, being, and relating. It is important to note that disidentification with any of these patterns is an indication that you probably have more work to do in that area, as these patterns are deeply socialized within us. Rather than transcend them, we can likely only commit to continuing to grapple with them over the long term.

Continuity: Seeking the perpetuation (and perhaps expansion) of the existing system and its promised securities, certainties, and entitlements. This pattern leads people to approach change in conditional ways wherein they calculate the perceived benefits of change against potential losses, and generally do not make choices (or renounce choice in ways) that compromises their own position of advantage. E.g. *"I want to transcend colonialism without giving anything up."*
Innocence: Positioning oneself outside complicity in violence, often because of one's stated commitment to be against violence. This pattern erases how our implication in harm is largely the product of our structural positions within harmful systems, and our learned, unconscious habits of *being* rather than a product of active intellectual choices to hurt others. E.g. *"Because I say that I am against violent systems, that means I am no longer complicit in them."*
Recentring: Privileging the feelings, experiences, and perspectives of oneself and/or the majority group/nation/etc., rather than looking at systemic dynamics of inequality and violence, and discerning from there what actions are needed in order to work toward developing healthier possibilities for co-existence. E.g. *"How will this change affect me/make me feel?"*
Certainty: Desiring (and demanding) fixed, totalizing knowledge, simple and guaranteed answers to complex problems, and predetermined outcomes before taking action. This pattern denies that all knowledge is situated and contextually (rather than universally) relevant, and that all solutions are partial, imperfect, and may reproduce the problems they seek to address, or create new ones. E.g. *"I deserve to know exactly what is going to happen, when, and where."*

Unrestricted autonomy: Placing primacy on one's free choice and independence at the expense of honouring interdependence and responsibility. Further, this pattern envisions responsibility as an intellectual choice, often based on a cost-benefit, utility-maximizing analysis, as opposed to a visceral pull to do what is needed in order to maintain respectful reciprocal, relationships premised on trust and consent. E.g. *"I am not accountable to anyone but myself, unless I choose to be."*

Leadership: Framing oneself, *or* another person or community, as uniquely worthy and deserving of the power to determine the approach and direction of change. This pattern positions the exceptional person or group above critique and outside of complicity, thereby imposing unrealistic expectations that make it difficult to acknowledge the complexities and the good, the bad, the ugly, and the broken in everyone. E.g. *"Either I, or the person or group I designate, is exceptionally qualified and entitled to direct and determine the character of change."*

Authority: Appointing oneself a/the moral and political authority with the right to arbitrate justice, and/or an epistemological authority with the right to adjudicate the truth and the most desirable path toward change. Generally, this pattern re-silences those who are ignored systemically, and imposes one's own desires and expectations onto others' existence. E.g. *"I should be the one to determine who and what is valuable and deserving of which rights, privileges, and punishments."*

Recognition: Seeking affirmation of one's righteousness, redemption, and exceptionalism (often to justify one's merit and the enjoyment of privileges). Often recognition is sought by curating (and trying to control) one's public image and attempting to ensure that one is seen and heard as being and doing 'good.' This circular pattern serves as a distraction from focusing on the work that is needed in order to interrupt harmful systemic behaviours and desires in oneself and others. E.g. *"But don't you see that I'm one of the 'good' ones?"*

When these desires or perceived entitlements are not met in the context of decolonizing efforts, it can lead to feelings of frustration, hopelessness, and betrayal, which can in turn result in outward displays of various fragilities or even violence. When thinking educationally, if these desires are not identified, interrupted, and 'composted', that is, transformed into something more generative, then decolonization itself will either be outright resisted, or else be packaged into processes, experiences, or expressions that can be readily consumed in ways that appease these desires (hence, circular). Decolonization efforts that do not seek to attend to these desires may result in short-term harm reduction benefits, but will ultimately do little to interrupt underlying structures of harm.

In order to become more familiar with these patterns and how they operate in practice, we invite two possible exercises. The first exercise is to learn to spot and sit with these patterns as they pop up unannounced in your life during the next seven days. You can also spot them around you, in the responses of others. You could create a bingo game with the patterns as well, in order to lighten it up. You can also observe the reward mechanisms that exist for these patterns and how you and other people derive pleasure and satisfaction from them. Reflect on the depth of the challenge of trying to change these patterns in a whole culture (but don't despair). As you spot and observe, you are invited to 'sit with' what is in front of you, with self-compassion, without praising or condemning, without vilifying, demonizing or weaponizing, without seeing these patterns as problems to be fixed.

The second exercise related to the CIRCULAR framework is the following guided activity. It might be helpful to have one person read this text aloud while others listen and engage the exercise:

Close your eyes. For each of the patterns, try to think of a time when you reproduced them. (You can refer back to the list above and examples if you need to, in order to jog your memory.) If you can't think of an example for each, then you can think of times when you witnessed others reproducing them. But it is much better to think of an example from your own experience (we suspect that if you look hard enough, you will find one—none of us are immune from these).

Next, sense in your body (rather than intellectual identification with your thinking mind) which of these examples carries the most affective or emotional charge for you. Stay with that example.

Ask yourself what specific emotions are arising in you in relation to this example. There are probably more than one, and some of them might be conflicting. Try to discern if there are specific emotions that are arising in specific parts of your body. You might decide to write down these emotions, or draw them, to make them more tangible and real. Perhaps draw where they are located in your body, if you can discern that. You might also ask which passenger was driving the bus in this example. If you aren't doing so already, you might also want to think about how the example you chose might contain elements of the other circular colonial patterns listed here, as well as other patterns that we have not included, but are common.

Now that you have become more familiar with these emotions and where they sit within your body, it's time to decentre yourself a bit. Think about how the example of the circular pattern that you are thinking of might have been harmful to the other people present at the time, especially those who are a part of communities that are marginalized within our colonial system. Consider what and how these individuals might have been thinking or feeling about you enacting this colonial pattern. If no one from these communities was present at the time, think about how they might have thought or felt about your actions (or inactions) if they were. Return to your body. Sense how your body responds when considering your impact on others. Sit with those sensations.

Next, try to sense into the way that those negatively affected by your actions might have been feeling (or would have felt if they were present). At the same time as you do this, be wary of projections—recognize and respect that it is impossible to discern or feel what specific individuals are thinking or feeling, unless they tell you; and even then, you are limited in your ability to experience what they experience. Rather than empathize with them, try tune in to and be a witness to their different potential emotional responses. Take your time with both feeling and thinking through how your actions might have affected others. Consider not only those present, but also those who might have been harmed indirectly as well.

Next, take a step back from this dynamic between yourself and those who were immediately present in order to consider the larger set of stories in which you are both embedded. How were your circular colonial actions, as well as the responses of others, rooted in a larger socio-historical system and set of relations? What are the basic dimensions of this system? How did this system play out in the example you conjured? How were your actions conditioned, sanctioned, and encouraged by this system, and how did your actions contribute to the reproduction of this system?

How were the responses of others present also conditioned by this system (this can include responses rooted in a refusal of or resistance to this system)? Were there parts or moments in your example in which this system, or the circular pattern, were named, interrupted, critiqued, or unsettled? What did that disruption look and feel like for you? How did you and the others present respond when this happened (and/or were you part of that disruption, even as you were also part of its reproduction)? If this pattern was not disrupted, why not?

Looking back, what could you have done differently in the context of this memory? What would have been a more responsible, accountable set of actions or responses? Why is it so difficult to disrupt these circular patterns in ourselves and others, and to act otherwise?

Now go back to your specific actions that reproduced the circular pattern you identified. What desires, investments, fears, fragilities, or traumas might be behind your reproduction of this pattern? How are these desires, investments, fears, fragilities, or traumas systemically produced? How might these desires, investments, fears, fragilities, or traumas also be related to the specificities of your personal biography and socio-historical positionalities? Next, think through what you have learned thus far in this workbook and elsewhere, consider: What might you need to do in order to work through these desires, investments, fears, fragilities, or traumas, so that you can show up differently to decolonizing work and interrupt or even pre-empt circular colonial patterns?

Having sat with these prompts, let this memory go, and thank your body for remembering. But before moving on, take some time to consider what you have learned by sitting with this memory. And consider who has paid the costs of your learning. How can you integrate this learning, so that others do not have to continue to shoulder these costs?

Alongside the CIRCULAR framework, the following poem, "Wanna be an ally?" invites readers to rethink the motivations and desires that are driving their solidarity work, and invites them to engage from a place of responsibility rooted in our shared existence on a finite planet rather than from a place of charity, pity, paternalism, or self-aggrandizement.

Wanna be an ally?
(available at: https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/wanna-be-an-ally/)

don't do it for charity, for feeling good, for looking good, or for showing others that you are doing good
don't do it in exchange for redemption from guilt, for increasing your virtue, for appeasing your shame, for a vanity award

don't put it on your CV, or on facebook, or in your thesis, don't make it part of your brand, don't use it for self-promotion

don't do it as an excuse to keep your privileges, to justify your position, to do everything except what would be actually needed to change the terms of our relationship

do it only if you feel that our pasts, presents and futures are intertwined, and our bodies and spirits entangled

do it only if you sense that we are one metabolism that is sick, and what happens to me also happens to you

do it recognizing that you have the luxury of choice to participate or not, to stand or not, to give up your weekend or not, whereas others don't get to decide

don't try to "mould" me, or to "help" me, or to make me say and do what is convenient for you

don't weaponize me ('I couldn't possibly be racist')
don't instrumentalize me ('my marginalized friend says')

don't speak for me ('I know what you really mean')
don't infantilize me ('I am doing this for you')

don't make your actions contingent on me confiding in you, telling you my traumas, recounting my traditions, practicing your idea of 'right' politics, or performing the role of a victim to be saved by you or a revolutionary that can save you

and expect it to be, at times, incoherent, messy, uncomfortable, difficult, deceptive, contradictory, paradoxical, repetitive, frustrating, incomprehensible, infuriating, dull and painful – and prepare for your heart to break and be stretched

do you still want to do it?

then share the burdens placed on my back, the unique medicines you bring, and the benefits you have earned from this violent and lethal disease

co-create the space where I am able to do the work that only I can and need to do for all of us

take a step back from the centre, the frontline from visibility relinquish the authority of your interpretations, your choice, your entitlements, surrender that which you are most praised and rewarded for

don't try to teach, to lead, to organize, to mentor, to control, to theorize, or to determine where we should go, how to get there and why

offer your energy to peel potatoes, to wash the dishes, to scrub the toilets, to drive the truck, to care for the babies, to entertain the kids, to separate the trash, to do the laundry, to feed the elders, to clean the mess, to buy the food, to fill the tank, to write the grant proposal, to pay the tab and the bail

to do and support things you can't and won't understand, and do what is needed, instead of what you want to do, without judgment, or sense of martyrdom or expectation for gratitude, or for any kind of recognition

then you will be ready to sit with me through the storm
with the anger
the pain
the frustration
the losses
the fears
and the longing for better times
with each other

and you will be able
to cry with me
to mourn with me
to laugh with me
to 'heart' with me
as we face our shadows
and find other joys
in earthing, breathing, braiding,

growing, cooking and eating,
sharing, healing, and thriving

side by side
so that we might
learn to be ourselves
but also something else
something that is also
you and me
and you in me
and neither you nor me

Chapter 8: Learning to Read (Yourself and Others) and Be Read

Failure is inevitable in any kind of difficult, complex work; thus, failure is inevitable in the process of decolonization. In fact, often our deepest (un)learning happens when we fail. Thus, we suggest that it is not a problem to fail; what matters is *how* we fail. We encourage people to strive to fail with humility, hyper-self-reflexivity, and with a sense that we have to accept responsibility for how our failure might have negatively impacted others, as well as accept responsibility for learning from the failure itself. In other words, if we are going to fail, let's fail with both intellectual and relational rigour.

Part of doing this work is recognizing how and why we have failed, and how this relates to systemic colonial patterns that we might critique intellectually but nonetheless reproduce in practice. To truly examine these patterns, and thus, to see where we are *really* at in our process of decolonization, requires a level of honesty with ourselves (when we are doing this work internally), and a level of trust in others (when we are doing this work collectively). Sometimes, it is hard to stay focused on the path of decolonization unless someone is holding up a mirror for us, reminding us to have discernment and to revisit the commitment that we made to stay with this work, especially when it gets difficult. Because there is not always someone around willing to do this mirror work, or because we might not have people who we trust to support us in doing it, below we offer a list of 'hyper-self-reflexivity' questions to ask yourself as you strive for more honesty and seek to 'fail generatively.'

Hyper-Self-Reflexivity Questions for Learning from the Gifts of Failure

- To what extent are you reproducing what you critique?
- To what extent are you avoiding looking at your own complicities and denials, and at whose expense? How might you be making more work for other people without realizing it?
- What is your theory of change? What do you expect, and what are you afraid of?
- What are you doing this for? Who are you accountable to? Who and what is this really about?
- Who is your imagined audience? What do you expect from this audience? What compromises have you made in order for your work to be intelligible and relatable to this audience? To what extent can this compromise the work itself? Who are you choosing not to upset and why?
- What unconscious attachments, fears, projections, and desires may be directing your thinking, actions and relationships? How do these impact you, and your relationships?
- How wide is the gap between where you think you are at and where you are actually at? What truths are you still not ready, willing, or able to speak or to hear?
- What cultural ignorances do you continue to embody and what social tensions are you failing to recognize?
- What fantasies/delusions are you still attached to?
- Where are you stuck? What is keeping you there? How can you distinguish between escapist distractions and the work that needs to be done?
- How can being overwhelmed, disillusioned, and uncertain about how to move forward be productive?
- Who would legitimately roll their eyes at what you are doing? To what extent are you aware of how you are being 'read' by different communities, especially Indigenous communities?
- How can you respond with humility, honesty, and hyper-self-reflexivity when your work or self-image are challenged?
- What would you need to give up or let go of in order to go deeper?

● Who would be able to help you be more honest in formulating your answers to the above questions? Would you be able to listen if they told you?

Radars for Identifying Colonial Behaviors, Responses, and Dispositions
(available at: https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/radars-i-learning-to-read-and-to-be-read/)

In the hyper-self-reflexivity questions above, we invited you to consider how different communities — especially Indigenous communities—might be reading you. To deepen this work, the following 'radars' can support you in the practice of learning to more quickly and astutely scan a situation and discern the naturalized intellectual, affective, and relational patterns that are present in oneself and in others. These radars can also support a practice of interrupting these patterns with more patience and generosity, but also with accountability to those who bear the highest costs of this learning.

The patterns of behavior and response we identify are perceived generally as harmless, but they can seriously derail even 'well-intended' decolonization efforts. These radars are an invitation to start or continue to denaturalize your perceived entitlements and interrupt your satisfaction with the colonial systems and promises that have been established to benefit you. As we have noted before, having a stated intellectual critique and political commitment to decolonization does not mean that your colonial desires and presumed entitlements have been interrupted thoroughly.

Finally, these radars are not meant as strict standards of moral authority for shaming people. They were instead created to help dissolve fragilities, unlearn harmful patterns and enable more generative and ethical responses, especially in situations where we feel the unsettling discomfort of having our self-images challenged. (Because this is a different approach than many people are used to, we invite you to read this paragraph more than once so that it has a chance to really sink in.)

For each radar, we offer a brief description of what refining and honing that radar would entail, as well as an example of when and how the radar under discussion might be 'activated'.

The harmony radar: Discern how desires for (superficial) harmony, consensus, and unity can end up suppressing or flattening conflicts, paradoxes, and complexities, and becoming alibis for escaping responsibilities related to accountability for the systemic, historical, and ongoing violences that enable the comforts, opportunities, and security that we enjoy.
> E.g. Emphasizing 'getting along', and centring the comfort of those in dominant positions, at the expense of doing the difficult work of addressing tensions and conflicts that are actually impeding the possibility of healthy, reciprocal relationships.

The "goodness" radar: Sense when what is unfolding in individual or collective processes is oriented by what feels good, looks good, and enables us to 'move on' (i.e. oriented by what we want), rather than being oriented by what is actually needed so that we can show up in order to take responsibility (with humility) for collective-well being.
> E.g. Dismissing conversations about individual and collective complicity in violence because it might make students feel bad and challenge their positive self-image (particularly within an educational system that treats them as customers).

The entitlement-to-affirmation radar: Realize when the ego demands an audience to validate its self-image and self-importance. This can also be a collective tendency to offer excessive praise in order to make everyone feel'"amazing'. Consider how others might see you/your group, especially marginalized

communities, and how the actions that you consider normal can be both ridiculous and harmful; learn to laugh at your own absurdity but also to take responsibility for the harms that are done through our 'normal.'

> E.g. Using collective time as a space to process personal things and affirm one's fantasies, instead of using it as a space for shared learning in ways that would be useful to others.

The band-aid radar: Interrupt the search for simplistic (and often harmful) solutions, the refusal to address complicity in harm, the desire to make or be a key part of the solution, and the naïve/colonial hope for the reformability of existing systems, and thus, for the continuity of those systems (along with certainty and futurity); and ask how these patterns of response enable social and ecological violences to persist.

> E.g. Seeking a predefined, feel-good checklist for transformation (whether focused on inclusion of decolonization) and refusing to commit to the difficult, uncomfortable, non-linear, long-term process of individual and collective change that will likely require giving up one's perceived securities and entitlements.

The appropriation radar: Discern how knowledges and practices from other peoples and cultures is engaged in selective, romanticized, and/or appropriative ways, generally focusing on what makes 'sense' and what makes us feel good, and discarding what we don't want to face, which is usually the part that we need to work on most;

> E.g. Engaging with Indigenous cultural production (e.g. movies, literature, films, dance) in ways that are divorced from Indigenous peoples' political struggles for collective resilience against colonial violence (in which one is likely complicit).

The fragility radar: Attend to the ways that people's sensitivities are activated as a means to deflect responsibility. In particular, notice how the refusal of unconditional validation and affirmation generates reactions of aggression against those who exercise this refusal. Note the ways that the lack of stamina for difficult conversations (especially about complicity) tends to lead people to defend themselves and emphasize their good intentions, refocusing collective time and attention back to themselves with stories that prove their innocence.

> E.g. Hijacking a conversation about collective strategies for addressing the reproduction of systemic colonial violence in order to voice one's own feelings of guilt and shame.

The ego-centrism radar: Denaturalize the demand for a type of attention that places us at the centre while exempting us from responsibility. For instance, this might manifest as people offering (or imposing) care in order to bring attention to themselves and absolve their guilt, without actually paying attention to the real needs of the context or consequences of this demand, such as the imposition on peoples' bodies and spaces.

> E.g. Emphasizing what one can contribute to the process of transformation, rather than assessing the particulars of a given context and discerning what is needed in different layers from different people and communities.

The 'saying it is doing it' radar: Interrupt the fantasy that stating our commitment to do something means that we are already acting differently, without actually doing the difficult work of unlearning and disinvesting from one's harmful habits and desires.

> E.g. Loudly critiquing one's institution's complicity in colonization without realizing how you are also complicit in the reproduction of colonial violence, and using one's critique as a means to assert one's own innocence and seek influence.

The stock exchange radar: Recognize the desire to increase one's personal value through transactions in moral and intellectual economies that are based on demands for self-satisfaction, validation, relief, virtue, transgression, autonomy, authority and choice.

> E.g. Framing oneself as an 'ally' to Indigenous communities in ways that seek to determine how one is seen by others (especially as innocent and benevolent), and to recentre oneself in the process of transformation.

The paternalism radar: Sense when one's relationships with marginalized communities are being instrumentalized to enhance one's sense of self-importance—also known as a "(white) savior complex." This may manifest in people who want to 'help' in order to make their own virtue visible without being responsive to priorities of the communities, and engaging them on their own terms.

> E.g. Arriving at a local Indigenous community seeking their collaboration with a predefined research project that centres the agenda of the researcher, rather than asking the community what kind of collaboration would be useful (if any).

The steamrolling radar: Notice how perspectives from Indigenous or racialized groups are interpreted as fitting with the (often colonial) theories and theorists with which people identify. Also notice how people get upset when someone says, "It is not the same." This tendency frames difference as either too different to be intelligible or too similar to be relevant in its own right.

> E.g. An Indigenous person shares something about *buen vivir* (derived from Andean onto-epistemology) and *buen vivir* gets interpreted as being the same or similar to post-humanism, eco-feminism and/or socialism. *Buen vivir* is then reduced to a cheap/exotic 'complement' (or copy) to what is important because of the underlying desire on the part of those interpreting for totalizing/universal knowledge.

The contextual relevance radar: Determine when certain strategies, frameworks, or knowledges might be useful (or not), and thereby interrupt the desire for fixed, singular solutions, or knowledge authorities that can tell us what and when to act.

> E.g. Recognizing when emphasizing community heterogeneity and nuance are important for moving a conversation, and recognizing when they are likely to be instrumentalized to deflect an audience's responsibility for structural harm.

The layering radar: Discern between your political and existential accountabilities, recognizing that in one layer of reality we are all interconnected and entangled with each other, and at many other layers, we are accountable to the many structural violences and separations that are required for us to continue to be who we are and to have the options, opportunities, comforts, choices, and securities that we have.

> E.g. Reference to indigeneity is mobilized in different layers with different meanings, but mostly in highly problematic ways if mobilized by people who have not directly experienced the violences of settler-colonialism. For example, the common expression "we are all indigenous to a place" trivializes the struggles of Indigenous peoples who are constantly subject to colonial violence. This statement contributes to this ongoing violence. Layering requires a consideration of the layers of violence and privilege that are present in a specific context and a visibilization of these layers in one's narrative.

The moral posturing radar: Become attuned to when narratives deviate from real priorities and needs in order to focus on the description of the efforts, virtues, and transgressions of the speaker towards a

particular humanitarian/altruistic/revolutionary cause as a form of displaying one's accumulated moral capital, superiority and/or claim to power or authority.

> E.g. When people feel they are losing audience or space in a conversation, they may use moral posturing to assert their merit or seniority and reclaim their perceived entitlement to take collective space. This includes listing humanitarian initiatives to which one has contributed or is committed, listing marginalized friends that one has, or calculating the personal costs one has had for 'helping' other people.

The pay-back radar: Following the moral posturing radar, identify how one calculates "returns on investments" and perceived debts when engaging with social change, in particular with efforts related to 'helping' marginalized communities. Also consider if your work with communities is conditional upon an (often-romanticized) calculation that they are "worthy"; this approach tends to be premised on a notion of decolonizing work as charity work, rather than work of responsibility and redress.

> E.g. Someone who has committed to a specific cause expecting people from the beneficiary community to "pay back" what has been "invested in" them by giving the person who 'helped' them what this person perceives as a just 'reward.' This is not reciprocity, but rather transactional, harmful to the community, and forecloses the possibility of developing more meaningful, reciprocal, respectful, and accountable relationships.

The sausagization radar: Notice when people are interpreting words/messages according to their convenience, selectively mixing things for easier consumption in ways that trivialize and instrumentalize the work they are engaging with. This is often evident when people hear new words/concepts and start using them as if they describe what they are already doing.

> E.g. When people hear Indigenous narratives or concepts and quickly associate selective and convenient aspects of these narratives or concepts with their own experiences, consuming what they hear without realizing that they actually cannot understand what is being conveyed (as doing so would require a very different kind of engagement).

The [x]-splaining radar: In relation to matters of systemic violence, pay attention to when someone who is complicit in/benefits from that violence 'explains' it in a condescending or patronizing way to someone who has lived experience of that violence. This kind of intellectualization can be a means to deflect critiques of complicity and avoid accountability.

> E.g. When a settler 'explains' colonialism to an Indigenous person, it is called'"settlersplaining'; when a man 'explains' misogyny to a woman, it is 'mansplaining.'

The 'everything is awesome' radar: During discussions of colonization or when developing strategies for approaching decolonization, making a declaration about the overwhelmingly positive state of the world. This framing is often invoked as a counter to acknowledging the magnitude of oppression, complicity in violences, and the unearned benefits one receives through colonialism.

> E.g. When an individual asks others to not be overly negative and pessimistic, arguing that reason, science, and Western higher education, life, health, prosperity, safety, peace, knowledge, and happiness are on the rise, not just in the West, but worldwide.

Chapter 9: 10 Things to Remember When Things (Inevitably) Go Wrong

As we've noted throughout this workbook, no matter how much 'homework' or preparation you do, inevitably mistakes will be made and conflicts will arise between and among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the process of decolonization. This isn't an argument for not doing your 'homework,' but rather being prepared for when you realize that we are all largely unprepared for the task at hand. The deeper you go with this work, you will reach the limits of your prior experiences and this is when the potential for tension and harm commonly arises in our collective work.

It is important to also remember that there is more than one way to express frustration, hurt, or dissatisfaction. For instance, some people might be more likely to voice their concerns by confronting others directly, whereas others will be more comfortable with indirect approaches, for instance, by being silent or not showing up. There is a need to develop sensitivity to communicative strategies other than one's own.

In this section we review 10 things to keep in mind when conflicts arise (adapted from Towards Braiding). This can support you to work through conflicts in generative ways that also create opportunities for learning (while also always being aware of and accountable to the questions of whose learning is being prioritized, and who is paying the highest costs for this learning).

1. The first thing to remember is that these conflicts are not just individualized problems, but rather are **rooted in systemic, historical, and ongoing patterns of relationships** that are normalized (perceived to be natural) and socially rewarded. In this way, **conflict is totally ordinary**, as are the mistakes that tend to lead to conflict. Articulating conflicts and mistakes as systemic can help to depersonalize them, and perhaps de-escalate tensions and defense mechanisms. However, **the fact these are systemic should not be mobilized as a means to deflect one's complicity in creating or feeding harm**. Rather, recognizing these issues as systemic should serve as a reminder that, especially for Indigenous people, it is extremely frustrating to encounter the same colonial patterns over and over again.

2. The second thing to remember is that colonial relations have been ongoing for hundreds of years; it will not be possible to transform these relations overnight. Meanwhile, as individuals most of us have been socialized to operate within a colonial system for our whole lives; transforming our desires, assumptions, and investments will also not happen overnight. Interrupting and unraveling colonial patterns, and learning to engage more ethically with Indigenous peoples and communities, requires commitment to **a life-long, and life-wide process** and the development of **stamina, humility, and resilience.** Mistakes will be made and sometimes repeated, because this is not just about changing how we know, it is about changing how we hope, how we feel, how we form relations — this process takes time and is not linear. (It is often "one step forward, two steps back.")

3. The third thing to remember is that there is **no formula** for how to move forward together: we don't know how to relate differently yet and we cannot expect to have a clear idea of the journey or the outcome from the outset: it is like learning to walk and breathe in a foggy road together. Thus, if you are engaged in decolonization work looking for a secure outcome, you are likely to be disappointed and perhaps even derail existing efforts. The quality of the process and the outcomes will depend on the quality of the weaving of relationships and this weaving depends on people engaging in **good**

faith, being **open to the unexpected**, and **allowing themselves to be transformed**. Therefore, it is important not to suffocate the process with expectations and projections.

4. The fourth thing is to recognize that **often Indigenous people are expected to do the intellectual labour of** teaching non-Indigenous people about colonization; pointing out colonial patterns; developing decolonizing strategies; and translating between different ways of knowing and being. Further, Indigenous people are expected to do the **affective labour of doing this in a way that won't offend non-Indigenous peoples**, and often without proper compensation. This pedagogical, translational work is quite demanding, tiring, and often frustrating. Not only does this labour need to be properly compensated, but non-Indigenous people also need to **take more responsibility for their own learning** and their own emotions, and not expect Indigenous people to prioritize their needs or feelings.

5. Related to the fourth thing is the fifth thing: that some parts of decolonizing work needs to be done separately. For instance, Indigenous people do not need to witness non-Indigenous people naming and working through their colonial investments, as this can retraumatize Indigenous people. Equally so, there are often times when non-Indigenous people need to "get out of the way" and **hold space for Indigenous people to exercise their sovereignty and autonomy,** without being subject to a white gaze or whitestream agendas. Non-Indigenous people should not assume that they are entitled to access Indigenous spaces or knowledges, and should not feel entitled to "get it," let alone "master it" when they do.

6. The sixth thing to remember is that culpability is often found on both sides of a conflict. However, rather than point fingers, **non-Indigenous people should focus on what their part of that conflict is—while also recognizing that it can be difficult to see our own actions clearly,** especially in tense moments. This requires that we are open to being held accountable, and proactively seek to hold ourselves accountable as well. This includes trying to see oneself from outside perspectives (knowing that these efforts will likely be imperfect and contain some of one's own projections—see #9 below). And it requires apologizing for and addressing the harmful impacts of one's actions, rather than clarifying one's intentions.

7. The seventh thing to remember is that when two parties are in conflict, there are more than two competing desires and accountabilities. **People on both sides have accountabilities** beyond those at the interface, within their own communities. Both sides are also accountable to something beyond *all* communities. These multiple layers of engagement, meaning, and responsibilities should be taken into account as part of the overall process of accountability. Finally, accountability is central to being in good relation, and in order for it to be generative, it should not be articulated through personal accusations but rather generous, critique that affirms unconditional regard for the *being* (i.e. existence) of all those involved, even if/when one is raising concerns about their *doing* (i.e. actions).

8. The eighth thing to remember is that **having an intellectual critique of colonialism or a stated moral commitment to decolonization does not always equate to a shift in one's affective investments in colonial desires and perceived entitlements.** In other words, *saying we are doing something* is not the same as actually *doing it*; and generally, it is a lot easier to say we are committed to change than to actually change. Sometimes, desires and entitlements are only made evident when those who hold them start to feel that those entitlements are under threat—for instance, when the terms of conditional inclusion are challenged by Indigenous people. In these

moments of interruption, fragilities tend to be triggered and we can see where in the process people actually are. In this sense, moments of crisis when things appear to be falling apart can actually be important opportunities for different possibilities to emerge. However, in order for generative responses to be possible, we will need to have practice engaging in self-implicating systemic analyses, a recognition that we are not always transparent to ourselves about where our own investments lie, and a commitment to work towards something different without guarantees.

9. The ninth thing to remember is that we are unreliable narrators—that is, we are not always transparent to ourselves about our own investments and desires. **It is often easier to view others' actions with suspicion than to do the same for ourselves;** however, this self-reflexive work is crucial for enabling a shift away from a non-generative space. One way of practicing a (healthy) skepticism about our own desires, intentions, and impacts is to try and view ourselves through the eyes of the other parties involved. This is important for those (usually white people) who are used to having their perspective treated as universal, objective, and benevolent, and who tend to resist or become defensive when those assumptions are questioned. The imperative is not to permanently adopt the perspective of another, but to practice engaging that perspective with humility (and realism about our limited ability to understand it). It is important to try and do this work in good faith—even when others do not do the same for us (and perhaps to ask why this might be the case).

10. The tenth and final thing to remember is that we will be more likely to weather the inevitable ups and downs of decolonizing work, including the conflicts, if we **take the time at the outset to weave relationships premised on trust, respect, consent, and accountability** (Whyte, 2020), and to **develop the capacity to notice and interrupt our own internalized colonial patterns.** Although this does not guarantee that conflicts, when they arise, will not be tense and difficult, it offers a greater likelihood that once the conflict has passed, all those involved will be able to sit together and talk about what was learned from the process so that *perhaps* the same mistakes will not be repeated the next time—even as we might create new mistakes when we try a different approach.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

In this workbook, we have invited you to begin developing and deepening the intellectual, affective, and relational capacities that can prepare you to engage in more accountable and ethical decolonizing work. We have also created some opportunities for you to practice the stamina that is required to stay with this work over the long-haul, especially when things get difficult or uncomfortable. We have sought to introduce some of the complexities and challenges of this work so that you will not be surprised when things don't unfold in easy or expected ways. Furthermore, we have pointed out some of the common problematic patterns of both colonization, as well as decolonization efforts, so that you can begin to notice these patterns in yourself and others. Once you have accepted that these patterns exist in all of us, you will be better able to interrupt them when they arise, but also to ask where they are coming from and how you might break the pattern so that they start to arise less.

There are many ways to use this text. We invite you to read it all the way through, at least once. But we also encourage you to come back to it or to particular sections when difficult issues or tensions arise. Perhaps you will invite others to read it alongside you as a book club, or use one or two of the chapters to prompt discussion and foster conversations about decolonization in your own context. Much of what is included in this workbook can also be relevant to contexts other than colleges and universities. We invite you to get creative, and would like to hear from you how you are using it.

As this workbook is a product, largely, of our own ongoing learning and unlearning, we are constantly revising the resources, texts, and activities included here, and creating and testing additional resources. Many of these are "works in progress." This workbook is a living document, and we will continue to add new or revised resources to the text itself, or as additional links.

We also note that there are many important issues, questions, and topics related to decolonizing higher education that we have not addressed here—for instance, the relationship between decolonization and climate change; the relationship between decolonization and anti-racist efforts; the relationship between decolonization and internationalization. We address these matters elsewhere, and also invite you to engage this work if you are drawn to it. Beyond the limited scope of the text, we also note that each of the issues we do address have many more layers of complexity and nuance that we were unable to address in this resource. Hence, it is important to remember that this text is only an introduction to this work, a first step into work that is necessarily ongoing.

Finally, we note that learning through the process of decolonizing higher education can build stamina and capacities for difficult work in other areas. It may very well be that institutions that were built to preserve colonial power can never be decolonized. But in light of today's many overlapping social and ecological challenges, regardless of what happens in and to these institutions, learning that seeks to prepare people to face complexity, uncertainty, complicity, and paradoxes with more maturity, humility, and responsibility is relevant across many different contexts and circumstances.

Additional Resources

- ***Towards Braiding*** **by Elwood Jimmy, Vanessa Andreotti, and Sharon Stein:** https://decolonialfuturesnet.files.wordpress.com/2019/05/braiding_reader.pdf
- ***Towards Scarring Our Collective Soul Wound*** **by Cash Ahenakew:** https://musagetes.ca/document/towards-scarring/
- ***Pulling together: A Guide for Indigenization of post-secondary institutions by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education***: https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations/
- ***Native Land – On whose territories is your institution located***? https://native-land.ca
- ***Bargaining for Indigenization of the Academy*** **by the Canadian Association of University Teachers:** https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/caut-bargaining-advisory-bargaining-for-indigenization-of-the-academy_2020-01.pdf
- **Best intentions (or why do they only hire white ladies to teach Indigenous Ed?) by Marissa Muñoz:** http://www.criticalethnicstudiesjournal.org/blog/2017/4/11/best-intentions-or-why-do-they-only-hire-white-ladies-to-each-indigenous-ed

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